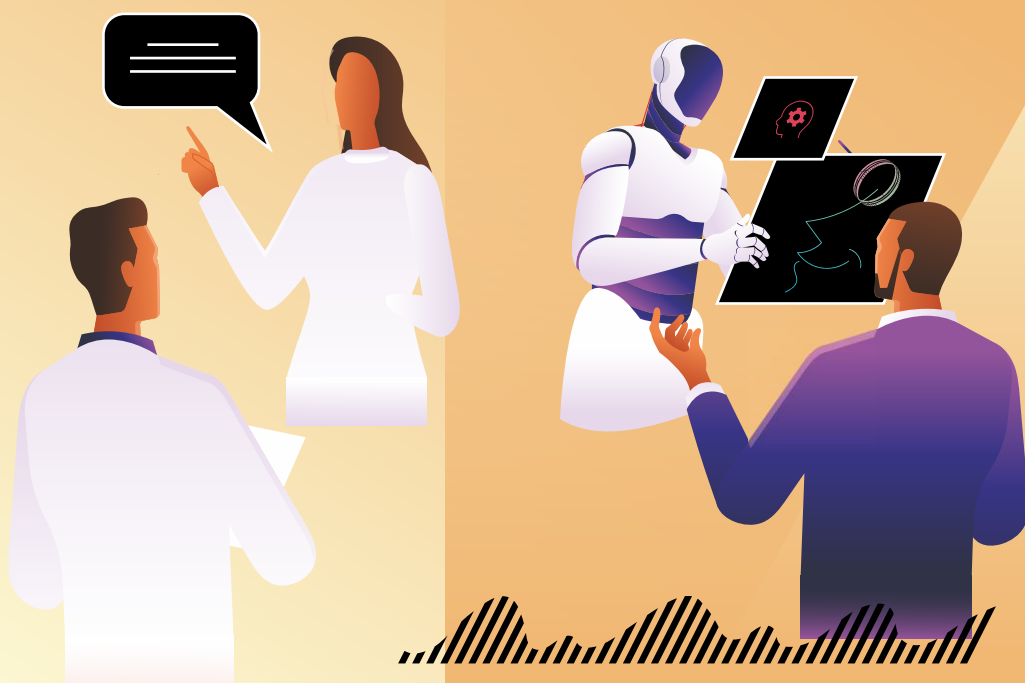


LIMBAJELE SPECIALIZATE ÎNTRE MEDIERE, TRADUCERE ȘI IMPACTUL INTELIGENȚEI ARTIFICIALE

Abordări metodologice,
direcții de dezvoltare și provocări



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*Abordări metodologice,
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Cuvânt-înainte

Aniversând 30 de ani de activitate fructuoasă în domeniul predării de limbi străine pentru pregătirea profesională, Departamentul de Limbi Străine Specializate al Facultății de Litere a patronat ediția cu numărul XIV a conferinței internaționale „Dinamica Limbajelor Specializate. Tehnici și Strategii Inovatoare”. Conferința a reunit numeroși universitari, cercetători și doctoranzi din sfera științelor umaniste, cu afilieri internaționale la universități prestigioase din Europa, interesați de dezbateri centrate pe oportunitățile și provocările generate de diversitatea de abordări pedagogice, de noile medii de învățare și de impactul medierii în transmiterea de cunoștințe lingvistice și socio-profesionale.

Tematica abordată în cadrul secțiunilor conferinței s-a raportat la medierea plurilingvistă și configurarea resurselor de învățare în funcție de multiliteratie, la propunerea unor arii curriculare adaptate noilor tendințe în predarea limbajelor specializate, respectiv la facilitarea dobândirii de abilități de comunicare interculturală și competențe transversale în rândul studenților. Un punct central al dezbaterii s-a axat pe potențialul creării de resurse și contexte de învățare prin intermediul inteligenței artificiale și a tehnologiilor digitale, ca instrumente ce pot configura atât evaluarea formativă prin secvențe interactive de predare-învățare, cât și procesul de creare de conținut educațional.

Rolul medierii în predarea limbajelor specializate a generat de asemenea dezbateri aplicative, prin prisma abordării colaborative în procesul de învățare, colaborare facilitată de diverse aplicații digitale, de medii multilingvistice de lucru și noi elemente de pedagogie digitală. Reprezentând o altă nișă a dezbaterii din cadrul conferinței, traductologia a fost prezentată ca mecanism de comunicare interculturală, ca abordare didactică, respectiv ca experiență individualizată de predare a limbajelor specializate. Discuțiile generate pe baza prezentărilor au confirmat realitatea mediilor de predare și învățare a limbajelor specializate ca racord între crearea, transmiterea și medierea conținuturilor lingvistice, pe de o parte, și practicile de asimilare și învățare, pe de altă parte, a unor generații în care

primează diversitatea lingvistică, culturală și profesională ca filtru de dobândire de competențe și abilități transversale.

Structurat în trei secțiuni, volumul de față reunește o selecție din lucrările prezentate în cadrul conferinței, expunând valoroase perspective asupra limbajelor specializate în limbile engleză, franceză, spaniolă și română. Prima secțiune, intitulată „Provocări și oportunități în contextul medierii și impactul inteligenței artificiale asupra noilor medii de predare-învățare”, sondează potențialul medierii în predarea de limbi străine specializate prin filtrul reflecției și al colaborării și investighează scenarii de utilizare a resurselor de învățare configurate de inteligență artificială generativă. Prezentând o perspectivă a modului în care studenții și profesorii percep și reacționează la tehnologii digitale în procesul de predare-învățare, autorii identifică o serie de provocări asociate noi mediilor de învățare, ilustrând însă potențialul insurmontabil al dinamizării cursurilor de limbi străine specializate cu asemenea instrumente digitale.

A doua secțiune, „Abordări în predarea limbajelor de specialitate”, evidențiază o diversitate de instrumente și abordări didactice utilizate în contextul pedagogiei digitale. Explorând mecanisme de motivare a studenților și de adaptare la nevoia de a construi competențe transversal în completarea competențelor lingvistice, autorii indică exemple de bune practici în contextul multimodalității. Scenariile didactice conturate pot servi ca punct de plecare în reconfigurarea contextelor de învățare, prin adaptarea materialelor de învățare, a modalităților de evaluare și a implicării active a studenților în procesul instructiv-educativ.

Intitulată „Limbajele de specialitate în contextul traductologiei”, cea de-a treia secțiune indică ipostaze ale predării limbajelor specializate prin intermediul traducerii, oferind perspective teoretice și practice asupra unor contexte specifice de învățare. Indicând exemple de erori care pot apărea în contextul traducerii de terminologie specifică și analizând tipare de utilizare a limbajelor specializate în contextul multilingvismului, autorii explorează noi modalități de aplicare a perspectivei plurilingvistice la sfera de comunicare prin intermediul limbajului specializat.

Volumul este o invitație deschisă adresată cititorilor de a reflecta și analiza modurile în care predarea și învățarea de limbi străine poate fi adaptată cerințelor și nevoilor de facilitare transversală a competențelor în medii de învățare care sunt sub egida dinamismului și a progresului tehnologic.

Editorii

SECȚIUNEA 1

**Provocări și oportunități în contextul medierii și impactul
inteligenței artificiale asupra noilor medii de predare-învățare**

The Scholar's New Companion: Mediating AI Capabilities and Regulatory Standards for Higher Education

ADRIANA LAZAR¹

Abstract: This paper outlines key outputs of regional regulatory bodies, such as the *EU Artificial Intelligence Act* (2024) or the *UNESCO Guidance on Generative AI in Education and Research* (2023) and reviews high-stake self-regulatory frameworks formulated by universities concerning the effective and ethical experimentation and use of AI systems in higher education. By providing an overview in these regulatory initiatives, this paper offers useful reference points for AI integration in higher education, encouraging engagement from the multiple stakeholders of the education sector towards more collaborative, more inclusive and more equitable policymaking.

Keywords: *Regional policymaking, institutional self-regulation, higher education, generative AI use, AI literacy.*

INTRODUCTION

Just three years ago, academic staff found themselves “graduating” alongside their students from what the pandemic prompted us to call the digital bachelor programmes, some taught fully online. This period marked one of the most intensive digital literacy upgrades for educators, as they adapted to the sudden shift toward online teaching. Then, in late 2022, the rise of ChatGPT initiated another wave of disruption, raising fundamental questions about how we teach, assess or design curricula. Media frenzy ensued, with preoccupations among students using chatbots to pass exams and hand in assignments, the demise of essay writing, ChatGPT’s hallucinations and sonnet writing skills. Concern also arose over research papers that began looking suspiciously well-tailored, abounding in bland, uniform language.

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As academia entered into what seemed like a whole new “work with AI or perish” era, educators were starting to grapple the expanding list of features of generative AI tools, each more specialised and more user-friendly than the last. By 2023, tools like Scopus AI could summarise abstracts, complete with sources, references and conceptual maps. Platforms such as Elicit.org could extract key details from academic papers into organised tables, while newer Chat GPT versions helped transform rough notes into lesson plans, well-organised slide presentations, infographics and flashcards. DALL-E 3 could generate a photorealistic image from text description to illustrate concepts, and tools like Unriddle could assist researchers in finding citations or revealing patterns in a research corpus. Just as academia was adjusting to this new workflow, something else happened. In March 2024, *Surfaces and Interfaces*, an Elsevier journal, published a peer-reviewed article co-authored by five researchers, and the *Introduction* section to this paper read the following: “Certainly, here is a possible introduction for your topic”. The uproar was not all about Elsevier’s publishing of ChatGPT-produced material or compromised publication and peer-review processes. More critically, this was a moment of saturation in the hype around generative AI tools, as the discourse shifted from the tools themselves to the uses of the tools and their broader implications. It signalled a turning point in the conversation about academic integrity, and into the limelight stepped regional regulators that began rolling out guidelines for responsible use of AI, alongside higher education institutions, or top tier publishers, who seemed to be adapting and redesigning their copyright policies to accommodate this new reality.

Therefore, this paper seeks to examine the current state of international regulatory position-takings regarding the use of AI in education, with a primary focus on higher education. To this end, it reviews regional policymaking, supported by official documents released by the European Union or the UNESCO, as well as local self-regulation initiatives, promoted by international higher education institutions, such as Harvard University, the Russel Group or other leading European universities. Through a comparative approach, the review attempts to: (1) identify key aspects and principles of both regional regulatory frameworks and institutional self-regulation policies, (2) delve into their significance and implications for a higher education ecosystem that increasingly intersects with generative AI, and (3) underscore the need for regulatory convergence and institutional policy alignment to ensure trustworthy and responsible AI use in the academic sector.

REGIONAL POLICYMAKING FOR AI USE IN EDUCATION

The release of the *Ethical guidelines on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data in teaching and learning for Educators* in September 2022, published by the European Union, coincided with the growing global attention surrounding AI-driven tools, particularly ChatGPT, released in a demo version in November of the same year. Such a timing seems far from coincidental, both the guidelines and the subsequent development of generative AI highlighting the urgency of addressing the ethical, regulatory and practical challenges that AI brings to education. Developed almost in tandem with the drafting and negotiations leading to the *EU AI Act*, the document is part of a larger framework, the EU's Digital Education Action Plan (2021-2027), supporting AI literacy, the "good knowledge and understanding of data-tensive technologies like AI" (*EU AI Act*, 2024, p. 9), as well as the need to deploy a legal framework for "trustworthy AI" (*EU AI Act*, 2024, p. 12). Forward-looking in its approach, the document promotes AI tools as "staple in personalized tutoring and in assessment" (*EU AI Act*, 2024, p. 7), recognizing the role of AI tools in supporting collaborative learning or formative writing assessment, discussion analytics and data-mining for resource allocation and formation guiding services. Furthermore, these guidelines laid out the groundwork for integration of AI within the context of broader European policy landscape, particularly by framing education and vocational training within the "high risk" category for AI, also in use under the *EU AI Act*, and by channelling the conversation towards a template of ethical principles or requirements, a strategy also deployed later by the UNESCO. As such, to tackle the challenges associated to AI use in education, this policy framework grounds itself on seven principles for responsible AI use: (1) "Human agency and oversight", (2) "Transparency", (3) "Diversity, non-discrimination and fairness", (4) "Societal and environmental well-being" (5) "Privacy and data governance", (6) "Technical robustness and safety" and (7) "Accountability". Remarkably, these measures are illustrated through various case scenarios in an attempt to equip teachers and students with guidelines on transparency, data governance and bias, to advance a "human-in-the-loop" approach for quality monitoring and validation, and to highlight the importance of AI literacy. This alignment of policy and practice, the deployment of principles for ethical awareness and trustworthy AI, also reflected in later regulatory frameworks, such as the *EU AI Act* and UNESCO's guidelines, shows its importance for the planning of policies and development of an endorsement framework that builds stability into a system that is continuously changing. Thus, on the long-run, this

type of policy design will appeal more to regional, political, policymaking rather than to local, institutional self-regulatory position-takings.

The *EU AI Act* was published in the EU Official Journal on July 12 2024 and was internationally acclaimed as “the first binding worldwide horizontal regulation on AI” (*EU AI Act*, 2024, p. 1). The *Act* legitimises itself through a “risk-based approach” and the nexus of this regulatory action is the fact that, in essence, rather than regulating the technology itself, it focuses on the uses of technology, on its applications. Thus, legal framework categorises contexts of use for AI, labelling them from unacceptable-risk² to minimal-risk, intending to make sure that its uses are congruent with the Union’s values concerning data safety, transparency, accountability and responsibility, prohibition of discrimination, and privacy protection. In an interview³ for the *Washington Post Live* (Zakrzewski, 2024), Dragoș Tudorache, co-rapporteur of the *EU AI Act*, reiterates the importance of this risk-based approach, placing AI use in education at the same level of risk as AI in banking, insurance or the health sector:

“An AI that is going to dictate the credit worthiness of a person over another needs to be free of bias, same thing for an AI that would be allocating tasks in a school for children. For those types of applications that we would be labelling as high-risk under the regulation there will be a set of obligations. They will be light-touch, because they are common sense, transparency from my point of view is common sense, data robustness and accuracy and being mindful and diligent about the data sets that you use to train the algorithms, for me, should be common sense [...]”

However, the *EU AI Act* details specific cases when the high risks associated with an AI system could be reduced, provided a set of pre-determined conditions are met. These include tasks that do not influence decision-making, such as transforming unstructured data into structured formats, the use of an AI system to improve an activity, like refining the academic language of a document. AI systems detecting “decision-making patterns or deviations from [...] patterns” (*EU AI Act*, 2024, p.12), such as verifying student paper grading, and “preparatory” tasks for various outputs, such as file handling/indexing, text and speech processing, linking data sources or translation are also considered low-risk. It is significant to mention in this context that providers must register such AI systems in the EU database, and guidance on their practical implementation is further supplied. Nonetheless, the

² For the classification of the risks, see [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698792/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)698792_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/698792/EPRS_BRI(2021)698792_EN.pdf). p. 8. Retrieved on September 13 2024.

³ Our transcript.

integration of AI technology in assessment or for measuring learning outcomes remains in the high-risk category for AI use in education and vocational training.

Hailed for its transformative power (Chan & Colloton, 2023, p. 90) on the way in which educators should approach assessment, on account of its highly potent data-processing capabilities and real-time, personalized, responses, generative AI assessment is far from being a one-sided matter. It may be inferred that the classification of AI assessment as high risk is actually contingent with the overall human-centred approach of the *Act*, advocating for a teacher-in-the-loop perspective. This view mandates a balanced integration of technology in education, with AI as a supportive/assistive tool rather than an alternative or a replacement for human evaluation and decision-making. However, to avoid ambiguity or oversimplification, more extensive consideration needs to be given to the uses of AI in education aside with a more visible consultation and collaboration with the stakeholders of this field.

Eventually, this is partially what the June 14 Amendments⁴ to the *EU AI Act* are trying to achieve, by offering a broader, more nuanced view regarding AI use in education and, particularly, foundation models and generative AI. Out of the 771 Amendments to the Act, 6 cover the education sector, making an even clearer statement of the potentially revolutionising role of AI in education and learning, with an emphasis on its implications in “modernising the entire educational system” (Amendment 65, Recital 35) by accelerating digital literacy, by increasing educational quality and accessibility, combined with a cautionary stance. The latter signals that while the EU fully recognizes the game-changing role of AI in education, the focus remains firmly on ensuring that such systems are ethically designed and regulated. Specific Amendments, such as Amendment 65, 715, 717 and 718 clarify that the use of AI systems in determining admissions, access to training or educational programs, or the assessment of educational levels is regarded as high risk. The same is valid for AI system design that can infringe on fundamental rights, perpetuate bias against certain groups of individuals, or foster inequalities.

In addition, both the *EU AI Act* and specific Amendments highlight two key components that ensure the long-term effectiveness and adaptability of this regulatory framework and its implementation. One component that may help bridge the gap between the shortcomings of a broad regulatory framework and the specific demands and realities of the educational sector is AI literacy (discussed in

⁴ For the full text of the Amendments, see: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0236_EN.html. Retrieved on September 13 2024.

Amendment 214). Incorporating AI literacy training into course curricula will empower students by helping them to understand how AI systems function, to recognize its limitations and biases, to exploit the full potential of various systems to enhance learning outcomes, to be alert to existing regulations, and learn to work with AI for the purpose of autonomous, genuine learning instead of risking to offload learning. Similarly, as deployers of AI systems, teachers need to be provided constantly with “skilling and reskilling programmes” (Amendment 214, Point 1) to be able to “ensure compliance and enforcement of this Regulation” (Amendment 214, Point 4), but also to efficiently use AI to develop learning and research. Looking ahead, as AI literacy will become standard and a “force multiplier” (Mollick & Mollick, 2023, p.2) for instruction, teachers and lecturers need to prepare for a redesign of their practice within an ecosystem that is AI assisted.

The second component that plays a significant role in deploying ethical and equitable AI is institutional self-regulation. This is a bottom-up strategy where educational institutions acknowledge the need to complement the broad regulations of the *EU AI Act* by developing their own standards and guidelines tailored to their specific contexts. Such internal policies ensure that AI use aligns with institutional values, ethical standards and the needs of the student population.

However, in June 2023, almost one year after the ChatGPT moment, a UNESCO global survey⁵ comprising over 450 institutions from the education sector indicated that almost 90% of the schools and universities of the UNESCO network had not formulated any regulatory policies for the use of AI. Nonetheless, at the time of the survey, OpenAI estimated over 100 million users, becoming the fastest growing application ever recorded⁶. The striking figures revealed by this survey indicate what analysts called a “vacuum of guidance”, as less than half of the respondents, mainly higher education institutions, had adopted a form of “pointed guidance” for faculty and students, and 60% of the institutions admitted that guidance did not imply a formal set of principles. According to Sobhi Tawil, the UNESCO Director for the Future of Learning and Innovation: “The survey results show that we are still very much in the wilderness when it comes to newly powerful generative AI and education” (UNESCO Survey, 2023). Consequently, from its high stake position, UNESCO urges the academic community to take a more proactive approach concerning guidance, with an emphasis on organisational learning, on

⁵ For the full description of the survey, see: <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-survey-less-10-schools-and-universities-have-formal-guidance-ai>. Retrieved on September 13 2024.

⁶ For more details and relevant statistics, see: <https://explodingtopics.com/blog/chatgpt-users>. Retrieved on September 13, 2024.

training for teachers and students, a long-term coordinate also stipulated in the *EU AI Act*, and system-wide policymaking.

In this respect, though UNESCO is not a regulatory body but has a specialised agency for education and coordinates the *Education 2030 Agenda*, it published a fundamental pioneering document for global policymaking in September 2023, *The UNESCO Guidance on Generative AI in Education and Research*⁷. In summary, the document calls for future-proof regulatory initiatives addressing the role of AI in education, specifically the impact of generative AI on how we define and assess knowledge, learning content and outcomes. To this end, it outlines recommended steps for AI regulation, as well as practical examples for policymaking and instructional design, aligning in this way to EU's *Ethical guidelines on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data in teaching and learning for Educators*, released one year earlier. Aiming at a regulation of generative AI for educational purposes within a human-agent and age-appropriate approach, the document highlights its assistive capabilities in augmenting human abilities through "ethical, safe, equitable and meaningful use" (UNESCO, 2023, p. 7). In support of governmental agencies and educational institutions, eight guiding measures⁸ for the planning of generative AI regulation are presented, each accompanied by a comprehensive list of recommendations. Collectively, these eight measures offer a robust working framework for policymaking, addressing areas such as: inclusion; linguistic and cultural diversity; human agency in teaching, learning and research; generative AI systems monitoring for appropriateness, rigour and impact on students; AI literacy skills or the implementation of locally relevant applications based on specific criteria from evidenced pedagogical research and methodologies. However, one of the most distinctive aspects of the document is its emphasis on creative strategies for using generative AI productively in educational settings. This aligns with the *EU AI Act*, by focussing on the use, on formulating acceptable contexts of application. By doing so, it thereby provides a validated ethical roadmap for institutional facilitators, educators and researchers navigating the overwhelming mass of potentials of generative AI.

LOCAL POLICYMAKING: INSTITUTIONAL SELF-REGULATION INITIATIVES

As political, regional regulatory initiatives began to take centre stage, with the *EU AI Act*, the *AI Regulation White Paper* (August 3 2023) proposed by the UK, the

⁷ See: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000386693>. Retrieved on September 13 2024.

⁸ For a detailed presentation, see: Chapter 4 : "Towards a policy framework for the use of generative AI in education and research", *The UNESCO Guidance on Generative AI in Education and Research*, pp. 24-27.

G7 AI Regulation “The Hiroshima AI Process Comprehensive Policy Framework” (in draft form, October 2023), the *Executive Order for the Safe, Secure and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence* (October 30, 2023) in the US, or UNESCO’s Resolution entitled “Seizing the opportunities of safe, secure and trustworthy artificial intelligence systems for sustainable development” (March, 2024), institutional approaches followed. An Educause survey⁹ indicated that “institutions are concerned about falling behind” (Robert, 2024) with “the rise of student use of AI in their courses and the risks of inappropriate use of AI (73% and 68%, respectively) [as] primary motivators for AI-related strategic planning” (Robert, 2024). More particularly, almost all the respondents to the study suggested that AI is making the largest impact on teaching and learning, whereas academic integrity is a preoccupation for 78% of the surveyed staff. More specific concerns indicate potential decrease in students’ writing education (Warchauer et al., 2023) and foundational skills, such as critical thinking, with the spectre of overreliance on such tools affecting the learning process overall (Chan et al., 2023).

Despite the urgency and widespread agreement on the risks of AI for higher education, institutional policies in higher education are far from uniform. Some institutions opt for defensive policymaking, sanctioning AI use, downplaying its capabilities and mandating the moral compass of faculty to uphold academic integrity, while others are more flexible, showing higher toleration for AI-assisted academic work or encouraging voluntary compliance. Compared to broader, horizontal approaches of various political institutions, self-regulated frameworks have a narrower focus, often distinguishing between teaching, research or academic publishing. Also, while regional frameworks emphasize collective accountability for contexts of use, ensuring that AI ethics is embedded in design, development and deployment processes, self-regulated frameworks focus on the user. Teachers, students, researchers are expected to use AI responsibly within specific ethical bounds, often outlined in honour codes, such as the case of the University of Harvard and Stanford, or a set of sector-wide guiding principles, like the ones of the Russel Group universities.

Among the prominent models of institutional policymaking, *The Initial Guidelines for the Use of Generative AI tools at Harvard* (2024) endorses “responsible experimentation”, by emphasizing compliance with data confidentiality and security, copyright and academic integrity. The guidelines provide a multi-level

⁹ For the research report of the survey, see: <https://www.educause.edu/ecar/research-publications/2024/2024-educause-ai-landscape-study/introduction-and-key-findings>. Retrieved on September 2024.

classification system for data confidentiality, enabling users to identify whether their data complies with institutionally acceptable practices concerning generative AI use. However, the key distinction lies not so much in the type of use, but in the type of tools, specifically between publicly available tools and university approved tools. Among these tools, we can identify the Harvard AI Sandbox¹⁰, offering access to LLMs from OpenAI, Anthropic, Google and Meta in a single interface, Microsoft's Copilot 365 and ChatGPT Edu¹¹, designed specifically to meet the needs of educational environments. It can be noticed that while the general focus is on accessibility and use of publicly available, free AI tools, such a position raises concerns over the status-quo (Salden et al., 2023) of regulatory frameworks, with paid, licensed AI tools as alternatives, either through individual purchase or institutional provision that are not explicitly covered. Additionally, this also brings into discussion the problem of long-term profitability and costs, alongside the more controversial issue of "the AI-divide", where some users have access to more resources than others, potentially exacerbating existing inequalities regarding AI technology and its benefits. On this point, it cannot be ignored that while licensed versions are making their way into the academia, some nations or institutions have placed a ban on such AI tools like ChatGPT over safety concerns.

In turn, an example of collaborative approach stems from the Russel Group universities, comprising top ranking institutions such as the University of Cambridge, the University of Oxford or King's College London. Member universities, "responsible for more than two-thirds of the world-leading research produced in the UK"¹², released a joint statement in July 2023, elaborated in collaboration with the Department of Education, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education and specialists from the pre-university sector. *The Russel Group Principles on the use of generative AI tools in education* comprises a set of cross-sectorial principles that revolve around AI literacy for faculty and students, discipline-specific student training for appropriate generative AI use, ethical and equitable incorporation of generative AI in teaching and assessment, transparent and ethical use of generative AI, revision of policies and trans-institutional collaboration. While such a progressive approach scores very high on having promoted a top-level, multiple stakeholder framework, it exhibits a lot of flexibility regarding pragmatic aspects. However, some of these aspects get resolved at a more granular level, as

¹⁰ For the full description and details concerning conditions for use, see: <https://huit.harvard.edu/ai-sandbox>.

¹¹ For the full description and details concerning conditions for use, see: <https://huit.harvard.edu/openai-chatgpt-edu>.

¹² For a general presentation of the Russel Group, see: <https://russellgroup.ac.uk/about/our-universities/>.

members of the Russel Group find it appropriate to further complement the joint statement. Thus, the University of Oxford has introduced a pilot version of its *Guidelines for the Use of Generative AI* (2024), acknowledging “the use of any AI tool [...] as a supportive mechanism to create value and enable productivity”. In this respect, acceptable use covers brainstorming, conducting research, or assistance with edits, transparency labels being recommended in cases where the AI tool consistently contributed to content generation. Similarly, while endorsing the Russel Group principles, the University of Cambridge mandates additional guidelines for its Communications team, privileging a policymaking strategy that is common to many regional regulatory initiatives that we have seen, built around validated contexts of use.

Meanwhile, the relative scarcity of official guidelines or positions from European universities indicates that many institutions are still in the process of formalising their policies, a fact also reinforced by the European Council’s initiative to regulate artificial intelligence in education across member states, with a 2025 deadline set for its Convention. Notable examples of existing policies from European universities include, for instance, KU Leuven’s guidelines, *Responsible use of Generative Artificial Intelligence* (2024) aimed at “promoting responsible use” of such tools among students, and *Using generative artificial intelligence as a researcher* (2023), a separate document focused on academic work. Both guidelines take a cautious, yet proactive approach to AI integration, advocating for a human-in-the-loop model that recognizes the assistive capacity of AI tools to “positively affect productivity”. Practicality is emphasized alongside transparency and responsibility, particularly in the clear differentiation between low-risk and high risk tasks when discussing the applications of AI for research purposes. In this sense, the documents formulate an optimistic rule of thumb: “the more responsibility you place on the system, the more verification, control and accountability is required with the outcome” (*Using generative artificial intelligence*, 2023). However, to ensure institutional ethical grounding, “transparent disclosure” is recommended for text generation of “existing knowledge”, “new ideas” or “synthetic data”, but not for the use of generative tools as language assistants.

A similar proactive approach¹³ is taken by ETH Zurich, encouraging learners and lecturers to prioritise “principles of responsibility, transparency and fairness”

¹³ *Generative AI in Teaching and Learning*, ETH Zurich (June, 2024). For more details, see: https://ethz.ch/content/dam/ethz/main/eth-zurich/education/ai_in_education/Generative%20AI%20in%20Teaching%20and%20Learning%20-%20Guidelines%20ETH%20-%20June%202024.pdf. Retrieved on September 13 2024.

(*Generative AI in Teaching and Learning*, 2024) and to uphold privacy and copyright regulations, while acknowledging the “supplementary role” of AI in academic and administrative work. Building capacity for teachers and students is a prominent coordinate of this framework for AI use, as the university engages to develop training programmes and targeted courses that enable them to acquire “advanced skills while working with AI” (*Generative AI in Teaching and Learning*, 2024), but also to equip them with “authentic competencies in a world that embraces AI”. (*Generative AI in Teaching and Learning*, 2024)

Moreover, in an effort to give national coverage to policymaking and regulatory actions for the use of AI tools, French higher education institutions endorse the initiative of the French Ministry of Education, responsible for the release of the document “Artificial intelligence and education: Research contribution and challenges for public policies”, in January 2024. This official position is part of a comprehensive national strategy of integrating AI in education, launched in 2018 and set for completion by 2030. One major coordinate of this action plan is “to lead in embedded AI, frugal AI, trustworthy AI” (*Artificial intelligence and education* [...], 2024, p. 17) , which – interpreted through the lens of the 2019 Beijing Consensus terminology – suggests the use of “new models ushered in by AI technologies for the provision of education and training services where the benefits clearly outweigh the risks, and use AI tools to deliver lifelong learning systems that enable personalised learning” (*Artificial intelligence and education* [...], 2024, p. 13). More specifically, according to this strategy, applications should undergo validation for educational purposes and have local pedagogical relevance, which is also stipulated in the principles detailed by the UNESCO 2023 Guidelines. A 3-actor (focused on students, teachers and the institution) categorisation and taxonomy of contexts of use for such applications is presented, ranging from language learning via AI assisted simulation, to automatic summative assessment of writing or administrative tasks, like course planning. To support implementation, strong emphasis is given to developing AI literacy, one significant initiative being the European AI4T Project, a course designed for teachers and school heads from France, Italy, Ireland, Luxembourg and Slovenia, in collaboration with their respective Ministries of Education.

This French approach mirrors similar trends seen internationally in higher education policymaking, stressing the importance of directing our attention towards a rapidly evolving educational ecosystem that embraces AI, and which needs to be approached from a humanistic, progressive perspective. Echoing UNESCO’s Guidelines or the European Commission’s Digital Education Action

Plan, France strategically prioritizes investment in human capacities, particularly in the training and development of educators and students, before other regulatory actions. On the long run, this strategy could potentially reduce the risks of the misuse of AI, such as overreliance without adequate monitoring, and allow teachers and students to take more informed ethical decisions, while also opting for domain-specific applications.

As research indicates a serious gap in access to training and support (Chan & Colloton, 2024, p. 143), the importance of systemic planning and evidence-based policymaking becomes increasingly relevant. However, with policymaking strategies diverging or some advocating for more progressiveness, there is wide consensus on the lack of national or institutional investment in capacity-building. For instance, the results of a survey (*AI in education*, 2023) released by Oxford University Press in October 2023 show that in the UK only 5% of the English language teachers felt “strongly prepared” for AI in education and 32% felt “not sure” whether they had the right training for teaching with AI. At the same time, the French “frugality”, prioritising bespoke AI for educational purposes, may introduce a new level of trustworthiness in AI use, but it may also expose the dimension of equity to the perils of resource fluctuation and disparities among higher education institutions. It has been suggested that cooperation with local providers (Salden et al., 2024) has so far allowed institutions to either develop their own secure web interfaces for an AI tool by purchasing licenses from major companies like OpenAI or Microsoft and imposing clear safeguards on data use for services, or to acquire university-specific applications. In this respect, it is worth mentioning that the shock-wave of AI transformation, especially after the ChatGPT moment, literally forced institutions into a phase of experimentation and testing, and finding AI-friendly technical responses and differentiated regulatory treatment in a short span of time proved to be an uneven, challenging process for IT talent, policymakers and experts in academic ethics alike.

TOWARDS COLLABORATIVE POLICYMAKING OF AI USE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In conclusion, long-term solutions that are “inclusively accessible” (Chan & Colloton, 2024, p. 141) adaptive and grounded in multi-stakeholder collaboration between higher education institutions, scientific publishing venues and regional regulatory bodies, would be essential for sustainable and responsible use of AI. Generally, as this review of international policymaking and regulatory actions has

tried to demonstrate, the proactive approach to AI use in education, seeking to balance innovation and ethical challenges, by discussing opportunities and risks rather than sanctions and strong safeguards, may, indeed, invite criticism.

On the one hand, such an approach may be accused of delaying regulatory actions and failing to keep pace with technological development. On the other, it risks aligning too closely to a pro-market approach, by encouraging the “move fast and break things” mentality, famously associated with Silicon Valley, by maintaining a state of regulatory ambiguity that allows the sector of higher education to become awash with commercial solutions customised to the sector but lacking in uniformity.

However, this review has attempted to balance the discussion of regional frameworks, such as the *EU AI Act* or the *UNESCO Guidelines*, with local self-regulation initiatives concerning the use of AI in the education sector, with particular focus on higher education. The objective has been to outline the relevance of collaborative frameworks and the endorsement of shared goals and principles, but also to suggest that the focus should remain on developing practical, equitable regulatory solutions such as accreditation models or standards for tools or clear assessment protocols for AI use in education, of more systemic solutions that reduce individual compliance. Last but not least, policies need to be easily translatable across diverse educational contexts and institutions. This cross-sector alignment should be aimed at increasing academic productivity without violating ethical norms. University validated deployment of AI tools, publisher platform compatibility with such AI tools, and the application of ethical standards can help create a sense of shared network, relying on reciprocal standards, for the multiple stakeholders of the education spectrum.

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AI-Powered Chatbots and Humour: a Match Made in Heaven?

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Abstract: Chatbots are becoming more popular in everyday life, and their applicability has made them a useful tool in various sectors, including education, healthcare, agriculture, finance, and software companies. New developments in AI technology push our understanding of the limits of machine learning and change the way we live and interact. For example, Elon Musk's latest foray into AI research has prompted the release of Grok, a generative artificial intelligence that can display sarcasm and humour when answering questions. The shift towards a more natural and witty conversational style in machine learning indicates an interest in creating human-like machines, making them easier to approach and understand.

This paper aims to briefly analyse the complex relationship between linguistic humour and AI-powered chatbots, providing insight into the possible consequences of an advanced artificial intelligence that can reliably replicate genuine comedic sense and contextual jokes, and the ethical implications of such a feat. It will also focus on computational humour and the complex machine-human relationship in the digital era.

Keywords: *artificial intelligence, technology, chatbot, computational humour, machines*

INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence² has deeply pervaded the cultural consciousness of the early twenty-first century, sparked heated debates in cultural contexts, and generated ethical dilemmas. A staple of popular culture, these technological marvels have become a buzzword not only in computer science but in fields ranging from medicine to education. In simpler words, digital systems are “everyware” (Greenfield, 2006) in the twenty-first century.³

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² Artificial Intelligence is used in the broadest possible sense in this paper since a conceptual differentiation between AI and other digital technologies is not the focus of this article. Robots and chatbots are mentioned as AI-related technologies. For a more focused and philosophical foray into defining AI, see Carter (2007).

³ Greenfield's revolutionary *Everyware. The dawning age of ubiquitous computing* (2006) is a fascinating foray into the invisible systems that are ever-present in our modern lives.

The concept of a sufficiently advanced technology such as artificial intelligence is not the intellectual product of the digital age. The idea of humanoid machines and mechanical men can be traced back to the Hellenistic period and Greek myths, including that of Talos of Crete (see Elliott, 2019, p. 1)⁴. Early science fiction narratives such as Mary Shelley's famous *Frankenstein* toyed with the artificially created monster trope (see Carter, 2007, p. 1). Since then, many literary texts have explored the possibilities of advanced technology. Artificial intelligence is also a recurring concern in popular culture. For instance, franchises like *The Matrix* or the more recent *Westworld* series embed explicit references to advanced AI systems, albeit in a dystopian vein. Video games such as Sony's *Horizon* series, *Deus Ex*, or the more philosophical *The Talos Principle* incorporate different aspects of novel technologies that remould the players' understanding of the possibilities of artificial intelligence. Another famous example is the puzzle-based game *Portal* that introduces GLaDOS, an insane artificial intelligence bent on destruction and mayhem.

Cultural anxieties often overshadow the new opportunities that AI opens up. Nowadays, public concern about the possible adverse effects of disruptive technologies is mirrored in social media platforms and mainstream media channels. As Norman explains, modern technology "is a two-edged sword always combining potential benefits with potential deficits" (2005, p. 211). This might suggest a cautious adoption of new technologies as the consequences of these transformative systems could be far-reaching and even dangerous, leading to technological singularity or apocalyptic scenarios. This idea is embodied in the "profound anxieties about world economic collapse, apocalyptic fears of global devastation, or the ensuing war against machines resulting from rapid progress in technological automation" (Elliott, 2019, p. 40). Moreover, these advancements open up a series of ethical questions with existential implications, such as the (re)defining of the ontological boundaries between humans and machines.

ONTOLOGY, DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES, AND HUMOUR

The enormous social impact of AI has led to transformations in terms of how humans interact, live, and work. Personal assistants, chatbots, and robo-readers are some examples of how the artificial intelligence revolution saturates our lives (see Elliott, 2019, p. xx). AI's potential to revolutionize education, for instance, is an exciting prospect that will enhance the learning process and improve the outcome.

⁴ For a deeper insight into the cultural history of AI, see Elliott, *Introduction*, pp. 1-22 (2019) and Pickover's *Illustrated History of AI* (2019) for a visually appealing reading.

From personalized learning experiences to virtual reality classrooms, the possibilities AI opens up will fundamentally change the educational field. As a helpful tool for educators, AI can be a transformative force in areas such as “personalized learning, ideation, adaptive learning, special needs education, bilingual education, gamification and immersive learning” (Bojorquez & Vega, 2023). Learners can engage in digitally mediated contexts for a more immersive learning environment that could include scenarios as diverse as reenacting historical moments in virtual worlds or discovering geography in a gamified setting.

As artificial intelligence keeps evolving at an unprecedented scale, the future ramifications of these advances are unknown and could have serious implications on a global level. Reflecting upon the ethical dilemmas surrounding artificial intelligence is relevant nowadays more than ever as this ubiquitous software has infiltrated our everyday lives on a profound level and deepened our reliance on it for various tasks, especially repetitive ones such as data entry.

At the present moment,

“Many of the anxieties and forebodings related to digital technologies and scientific breakthroughs are expressed as a fear of loss for “the human”, including the breakdown of existing patterns of identity- formation and basic frameworks of reference for interacting with others.” (Elliott, 2019, p. 40).

At the same time,

“One of the central distinguishing features of advanced artificial intelligence and associated new digital technologies is that the boundaries between humans and machines have – to a considerable extent – dissolved, which in turn promotes ever-growing opportunities for human-AI interaction in diverse robotic ecosystems.” (Elliott, 2019, p. 9).

In other words, advances in artificial intelligence and the increasing presence of digital systems in our daily lives spur ontological conundrums that fundamentally challenge notions such as reality or humanity.

Another concept that AI alters is our understanding of humour. Albeit a very advanced and constantly evolving technology, one of the many limitations of machine intelligence is the lack of humour, which “is related to the core of humanity” (Hietalahti, 2021, p. 163). The intricate relationship between humour and machines has been a topic of interest not only for philosophers and scholars, but it has also inspired popular culture and speculative fiction writers. For instance, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* introduced Data, a sentient android who displays a sense

of humour (see Veale, 2021, pp. 9-10, Hietalahti, 2021, pp. 157-158). TARS from *Interstellar* (see Veale, 2021, pp. 14-15) is another instantiation of the funny humanoid robot in contemporary cinema. These on-screen androids reflect the general public's interest in humorous machines and paint a picture of a transformed future in which such robots will be woven more deeply into the fabric of everyday life.

The relationship between humour and AI is complex as it encompasses various elements, including jokes produced by software systems, comedy performed by robots, and the linguistic peculiarities of funny conversations. In the present, as Veale elaborates, "If the human sense of humor is an ice sculpture of a majestic swan, then what AI gives us—for now, at least—is a bag of ice cubes." (2021, p. xii). However, progress in the field has been enormous in the last decades. For instance, bots have been used as joke generators. One such bot, @pentametrone, was created "to turn prosaic tweets into serendipitous poetry" (Veale, 2021, p. 54) on Twitter, delighting the users with rhythmic verses and catchy, rhyming patterns. By relying on preset data and computer algorithms, such bots, poetically put, "cast their own brand of sympathetic magic over language" (Veale, 2021, p. 55) to create novel linguistic structures meant to enhance user experience and engagement. At the same time, "Chatbots might be thought of as a kind of break out point between traditional and post-traditional understandings of creativity" (Elliott, 2019, p. 120). Computational humour is a facet of machine intelligence and represents a type of creativity that is specific to the digital age and therefore requires a new interpretation of creativity.

The various computer programs for joke generation and humorous content have been in development for centuries and sparked the interest of researchers for experimentation. For instance, the JAPE system was created for generating riddles or the wordplay-creating software STANDUP, aimed at children (see Ritchie et al., 2007, p. 91). Both systems were accessible and had practical applicability, such as enhancing creative thinking and improving social skills in children. However, no comprehensive scientific study has been carried out to confirm it (see Ritchie et al., 2007, p. 97).

Stock and Strapparava explain that "deep modeling of humor (...) is not something for the near future. The phenomena are too complex; humor is one of the most sophisticated forms of human intelligence." (2002) In other words, giving machines a sense of humour is not as simple as it seems, because humour is a multifaceted and quintessentially human quality. Some scholars even consider that "Humor is not only that final frontier for AI, but a *human* personality trait that is easily lost in translation" (Broin, 2018). Indeed, while generating and detecting

simpler jokes is feasible regarding machine learning, “building a model that can detect and generate all types of humor remains an AI-complete problem” (Winters, 2021, p. 8). This is a recurrent idea in several AI-related research. Veale, for example, explains that computational humour is an important goal for software developers because a sense of humour allows machines to understand humans better, making these systems a more useful tool for users:

“A good sense of humour—whether to recover our meaning in jokes, or to embed its own meanings— it is the ultimate test of a machine’s ability to truly ‘get’ us”. Teaching artificial intelligence humour will not only be a pinnacle in terms of research, but will also enhance the emotional connection between machines and humans and will even also affirm the machine’s access to the more sober qualities that are just as crucial to our dealings with others, such as imagination, creativity, and empathy.” (Veale, 2021, p. 249)

Teaching AI how to be funny can start with simple methods, such as playfully coding simple puns and wordplays. For example, machines can easily be trained to generate simple knock-knock jokes (see Veale, 2021, pp. 47-50). Other elements of computational humour include emotional responses, but “we must first give them a shared ontology of how words describe the world so they can use them in mutually intelligible ways” (Veale, 2021, p. 82). One way to improve an AI’s humorous focus is to broaden its scope, allowing for new experiences and stimuli for optimal results:

“If humor is its sole task, our AI is unlikely to acquire the novel stimulation it requires—the constant stream of familiar surprises and backdrops for optimal innovation—that enable it to be funny *and* relevant by speaking to the experiences of its audience” (Veale, 2021, p. 243).

The scientific quest for computational humour entails an ontological dimension that can be thought of as reflective thinking: a

“sensible assumption is that humans possess a sense of humour because they are self-conscious, but have a limited knowledge of their surroundings – we have firm conceptualisations of the world, but they can never portray world in a perfect way, and when we see that there is a deviation from our expectations, we can be amused thanks to our reflective thinking. Artificial intelligence needs to match this existential position to have a sense of humour equal to that of humans.” (Hietalahti, 2021, p. 163).

This philosophical view of computational humour can be interpreted as a variation of the Turing Dilemma, shifting the focus from consciousness in machines to self-awareness of the world and the many contextual deviations that humans

encounter and turn into jokes. At the same time, artificial intelligence should be able to reflect on its algorithms and data sets. Hietalahti calls this the "possession of a worldview" (2021, p. 156). At the moment,

"a kind of purée of real people—the *ghosts* of real people, at any rate: the echoes of conversations What you get, the cobbling together of hundreds of thousands of prior conversations, is a kind of conversational purée. Made of human parts, but less than a human sum. Users *are*, in effect, chatting with past." (Christian, 2011, p. 25).

Data-driven machines can only replicate such understanding or possession of worldview, so, computational humour has a long way to go to reach its full potential. However, their deep learning and self-learning capabilities could lead to a better understanding of humour.

HUMOUR AND AI: A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN?

The cultural fascination with bots, and more specifically chatbots, can be traced back to 1964 when MIT's Joseph Weizenbaum invented Eliza, a computer program "considered the first convincing attempt to simulate natural human interactions between a user and a computer" (Luger & Sellen, 2016, p. 5286). Since then, chatbots that can simulate natural communication have become widely available, along with other digital technologies and smart gadgets. As revolutionary inventions of the modern age, chatbots automate various mundane tasks, such as messaging, shopping or business workflows. Furthermore, chatbots and other generative AI tools enhance the digital conversation experience and social interaction by providing fast and effective answers and they are reshaping our social lives by being a "vital interactional resource" (Elliott, 2019, p. 120). Indeed, these non-human agents excel at many tasks, but "meeting the asymmetrical, inconsistent and spontaneous requirements of ordinary talk in a technologically error-free way" (Elliott, 2019, p. 126) is still a challenging goal for the future.

Today, chatbots can be customised to add a humorous tone to digital interactions. For example, ChatGPT has an extension called Comedy Bot, which gives users a digital comedian that can tell jokes or make witty remarks. Woebot, a chatbot designed to help users with mental health issues, subtly uses humour to lighten the conversation, create a relaxed environment, improve the user's mood and increase their overall wellbeing. Microsoft's Project Personality Chat is designed to help developers add depth to conversational context and customize the bot's personality for a better and more engaging user experience. Large language

models could also be used for inspiration or as “a baseline tool for comedy writers, like a thesaurus or search engine” (Baum, 2023). By relying on their algorithms and databases, AI systems can effectively enhance the joke creation process.

Veale goes so far as to say

“That is the real purpose of giving machines a sense of humor: not to deprive human comics of their jobs but to make our machines more like us, so they can laugh at what *we* laugh at and better understand what *we* think and feel” (Veale, 2022, p. 248).

However, humour is a complex, multifaceted concept that can be approached from various disciplines, such as philosophy and linguistics. As humour is “[hi]ghly referential, hugely contextual, with a spark of creativity” (Hilton, 2023), it is a part of human intelligence that is hard to define. Theories of humour date back to Plato's Republic and Aristotle's Rhetoric, but also appear in the writings of Immanuel Kant and Arthur Schopenhauer (see Kanuck, 2019, p. 4). One popular way to theorise humour is to understand incongruity as the fundamental constituent of verbal humour (see Winters, 2021, p. 2). As Winters explains, “Incongruity denotes the incoherence between the interpretation of two parts of a joke, namely its setup and punchline” and mentions “the incongruity-resolution (IT) theory” as a prominent humour theory (2021, p. 2). This theory argues “that humor arises and an incongruity is resolved” (Winters, 2021, p. 2), so the humorous effect depends not only on the setup but also on the hearer's interpretation that leads to the reconciliation of incongruity. In other words, “humor results when the incongruity is resolved; that is, the punch line is seen to make sense at some level with the earlier information in the joke. (Suls, 1983, p. 43). Such a feat depends on various factors, such as “memory recall, linguistic abilities for semantic integration, and world knowledge inferences” (Winters, 2021, p. 3), so it remains a problematic field for machines to master.

In terms of comedic relevance, AI-powered chatbots are clearly at a disadvantage. First, jokes depend on the socio-cultural context, and each language has some unique lexico- semantic features, so linguistic peculiarities should also be considered when developing computational humour. Age is another important cue. The generation gap between cultures requires specific types of humorous interactions. Another problem, as Winters points out, is that language models tend to focus on English jokes. Translating a joke is a complicated task and researchers need to find effective ways to achieve humorous effects in other languages too (see Winters, 2021, pp. 7-8). Other humorous modes of expression include puns, irony, and sarcasm, and all of these require cognitive abilities such as lateral thinking:

“Machine learning algorithms and expert systems are designed to perform specified functions on data sets, but not to consider seemingly unrelated information. It is that critical ability to perform lateral thinking—to identify similarities between seemingly unrelated entities, or to identify distinctions between seemingly related entities—that sets human beings apart.” (Kanuck, 2019, p. 5).

In other words, humans can pick up on contextual cues and understand symbolic meanings and connections, while computers cannot appreciate the linguistic nuances embedded in jokes and the ancillary and incongruous information behind situations or remarks. This is similar to the encryption theory of humour, which suggests that “humorous effects depend on accessibility to implicit information shared by speaker and audience” (Yus, 2023, p. 24).

They also lack situational awareness and a knack for unstructured information. Human communication is fragmented and spontaneous, so machines need to master the imperfect complexities of everyday language. Moreover,

“There is a plethora of contingencies and hesitations which infuse daily talk: people break into (and often disrupt) conversational flows; turn-taking is not perfectly ordered; and, in general, the talk which makes up conversations is of a fragmented nature.” (Elliott, 2019, p. 124).

In other words, AI-generated text should, in the right context, reflect the fragmented, often nonsensical, incongruent conversational style that characterises human interactions.

The emotional component of digitally mediated communication adds another layer of depth to the conversational interactions in digital environments. Specifically, some users may develop friendly feelings towards these machines, leading to “new forms of sociality” (Elliott, 2019, p. 168). In this context, “computational humor could potentially further strengthen this bond” (Winters, 2021, p. 3). Thus, imitative humour is a mechanism for deepening the human-machine relationship, enhancing the user experience and provoking emotional responses. According to Norman, “humans are predisposed to anthromorphize, to project human emotions and beliefs into anything” (2005, p. 138), so building a social relationship with chatbots is a likely future scenario, redefining not only how we communicate with one another, but also the psychological bonds people develop with these non-human agents. At the same time,

“fake emotions look fake: we are very good at detecting false attempts to manipulate us. Thus, many of the computer systems we interact with—the ones with cute, smiling helpers and artificially sweet voices and expressions—tend to be more irritating than useful” (Norman, 2005, p. 179).

Put differently, computational humour needs to match the contextual expectations of the user to evoke an authentic emotional reaction.

FUNNY CHATBOTS: A BRIEF OVERVIEW

The breakthroughs in language models such as GPT-2 or GPT-3 are an important step in the evolution of computational humour as these pre-trained systems, albeit limited, show potential “as a powerful brainstorming tool in co-creative collaborations” thanks to their “ability to mimic text by picking up patterns and repeating these in surprising ways” (Winters, 2021, p. 5). Chat-GPT, Bard, Llama, and Grok are some of the most famous generative AI tools developed recently that are widely popular among users. Grok is an outstanding example of such a language model. A system inspired by a science fiction novel, the *Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy*, Grok is trained to put a twist on traditional chatbots by sarcastically answering taboo questions:

“Grok is an AI modeled after the Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy, so intended to answer almost anything and, far harder, even suggest what questions to ask! Grok is designed to answer questions with a bit of wit and has a rebellious streak, so please don’t use it if you hate humor! A unique and fundamental advantage of Grok is that it has real-time knowledge of the world via the X platform. It will also answer spicy questions that are rejected by most other AI systems.” (2024)

One of the distinguishing features of Grok is its ability to engage in controversial debates and to give morally questionable answers. This is an innovative aspect of computational humour. However, a more measured approach would ensure a more responsible approach to user value.

Given that Grok is trained on data from social media platforms, biased and dangerous information is more likely to be shared and perpetuated (see Stokel-Walker, 2023). Furthermore, “chatbots, like a funhouse mirror, often reflect back our society’s understanding, but warp them in a way that can amplify issues.” (Stokel-Walker, 2023). Grok is indeed an innovative conversational agent on the market today, but users should be cautious and rely on their critical thinking skills when navigating the cyberspace.

Grok responds “with an air of humorous superiority” (Veale, 2022, p. 64), a marketing strategy to ensure that Grok is ahead of the other chatbots. Veale discusses “The specter of offense, of saying the wrong thing at the wrong time, or of saying something that is wrong at any time” (Veale, 2022, p. 238) which might hinder attempts at humour. Grok playfully subverts this problem by adopting a

sarcastic stance in conversational settings. Grok is an example of computational humour in digital communication, demonstrating the potential of chatbots to provide consistent and funny responses to increase user engagement and foster a deeper machine-human connection in online environments.

CONCLUSIONS

The digital revolution and the ubiquitous social media platforms have transformed human communication and entrenched their relevance in everyday life. As more advanced AI systems emerge, global societies will need to integrate them into the social fabric of life. Meeting this challenge requires new perspectives and critical thinking skills. As we plunge into a more digitised future, online-mediated communication will become more pervasive in all areas of life, including education and work.

For instance, personalized learning will be more prominent in the future and will enhance the learning process by giving every learner the chance to study and do schoolwork in a technologically mediated environment tailored for their needs. Exploring the various possible impacts and facing the challenges of AI is crucial to better manage and embrace such major technological innovations, while being aware of the risks.

AI-related technologies are more than a terrain of the digital sector, these innovative advances are deeply embedded in everyday life. As such, AI could bring forth a radical rethinking of identity and society, leading to new understandings not only of what it means to be human in the context of the digital age, but also of how humans and machines can coexist. Such an existential reconciliation of machines and humans includes computational humour and comedic exchange, as AI is a driving force in reshaping our understanding of humour. As Cowie explains, "Metaphorically, artificial agents that attempt humor are a useful companion to Socrates: they bring us face to face with the limitations of what we think we know about ourselves" (2023, p. 219). In this sense, computational humour has a revelatory function with existential reverberations as a system that prompts humans to reflect on their identity and limitations.

The benefits of computational humour include enhancing human creativity and expanding our understanding of comedy. In Lozowsky's words, "By harnessing the vast amount of data available, AI can augment human creativity and contribute to the evolving landscape of comedy" (2024). At the same time, as Veale explains, AI technology can be used "as a partner that looks over our shoulder, to

offer advice about what does and doesn't work" (Veale, 2022, p. 200). The vast amount of data available makes it much easier to train chatbots and improve the quality of humour, but human support and oversight are still needed to understand how humour works and to achieve the desired humorous effect in computational communication. The other challenges, such as context, language barriers or cultural sensitivities, are still problematic for dialogue interfaces, so the need for human assistance is still imperative.

Computational humour can indeed "enhance user experience and satisfaction. It can personalize interactions, evoke positive emotions, and create a more enjoyable conversation for users" (Lozovsky, 2024). These interactions rely heavily on training AI systems in the cognitive processes behind jokes, namely "pattern recognition, incongruity detection, and surprise" (Lozovsky, 2024). While these humorous stimuli can indeed have a positive impact on the conversation, the technology is not yet perfected in terms of using humour effectively in different contexts, based on various factors, such as age or culture.

Improvements in AI-driven language models will undoubtedly lead to advances in computational humour and to a better understanding of one of the most prominent parts of human intelligence. While human assistance will still be needed, a future in which chatbots can display a genuine sense of humour may not be far off, an achievement that could deepen the bond between machines and humans, adding a new level of depth to everyday interactions and diversifying communication. In other words, the fusion of chatbots and humour is still evolving, but with the seemingly limitless possibilities that AI can unleash, the future of computational humour certainly looks promising and filled with laughter.

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L'Intelligence Artificielle et la révolution de la vulgarisation scientifique

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Résumé : Les chercheurs sont considérés (à juste titre ?, pourrait-on se demander) comme des êtres particuliers, qui échappent, dans une certaine mesure, aux rouages de la société. Le rapport identitaire qu'ils construisent avec les sciences est articulé, dans la plupart des cas, sur leur défi de créer un meilleur monde. Certes, au niveau individuel, chaque être humain est en quête du bonheur. Toutefois, si au niveau micro, on peut parler plutôt d'une recherche individuelle du bien-être, au niveau macro, l'enjeu dépasse le contexte personnel pour mettre en question l'avenir d'un groupe social élargi.

Par conséquent, la vulgarisation scientifique, appelée également médiation scientifique, change le schéma de la communication. Si on ne parle pas à un interlocuteur bien défini, c'est parce qu'on s'adresse en même temps à soi-même et aux autres ; le chercheur est en train de mieux comprendre son parcours et ses résultats au moment où il les présente au public. Communication et réflexivité, ce type de discours met en question le but de la médiation scientifique : portrait en différé du chercheur ou ébauche d'un progrès encore peu visible ? Dans notre étude, nous voulons, dans un premier temps, essayer d'identifier et d'analyser les traits du chercheur ; puis, dans un deuxième temps, nous nous proposons d'examiner les objectifs et les modèles de ce type de communication pour arriver, enfin, à mieux percevoir l'impact de l'Intelligence Artificielle sur la vulgarisation scientifique.

Mots clé : *chercheur/ chercheuse, communication, intelligence artificielle, médiation, vulgarisation.*

INTRODUCTION

La vulgarisation scientifique est un processus assez récent ; si nous regardons la présence de cette notion dans les dictionnaires, nous apprenons que le concept apparaît tout d'abord sous la forme d'un verbe, « vulgariser », en 1512, désignant le fait de « faire connaître » (CNTRL, 2024) ; l'accent y est mis sur le but de l'action, sur l'enjeu à saisir : on diffuse l'information, on partage les connaissances. Nous remarquons l'absence de la mention du domaine à « faire connaître » ; 300 ans plus tard, le concept renvoie à la communauté à laquelle on s'adresse, signifiant « parler comme le vulgaire, le commun des hommes ». Cette fois-ci même si le décalage

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entre les niveaux des partenaires du dialogue n'est pas représenté de manière concrète, on ressent la différence sous-jacente ; si on s'adresse comme « le commun des hommes » c'est parce que le terme de référence est considéré comme étant situé plus haut, à un niveau supérieur. Toutefois, dans ce cas, on n'a plus affaire à la sphère envisagée : s'agit-il du discours ordinaire ou d'un discours plutôt spécialisé ? Cette précision paraîtra quelques années plus tard, en 1823, quand le verbe renvoie au fait de « mettre à la portée de tous ». Nous avons l'impression que le concept commence à partir de ce moment à se spécialiser, à mieux définir son aire ; on se dirige du haut vers le bas, du complexe vers la simplicité afin de rendre les choses claires pour le plus grand nombre. C'est une question d'adaptation, de reformulation, voire de traduction, afin de permettre une meilleure compréhension d'un sujet d'intérêt général.

Les sens de la notion de « vulgariser » changent en fonction de l'époque, mais le rapport auquel ce concept fait appel reste, en grandes lignes, le même : nous sommes confrontés à une transmission du savoir où on tente de simplifier les mots, les démarches, pour toucher un public plus large. Puisque l'objectif principal de la vulgarisation est le partage des connaissances, comment s'articule-t-elle de nos jours, dans l'ère de la communication ? Quelles seraient les transformations qui s'y imposent à l'époque de ce qu'on appelle « l'Intelligence Artificielle » ?

Dans notre étude nous souhaitons suivre une approche théorique afin d'offrir une image plus claire du devenir de la vulgarisation scientifique dans la société européenne ; nous privilégions l'axe chronologique tout en nous appuyant sur des étapes-clés de l'histoire de la vulgarisation. Dans un premier temps, nous allons identifier et analyser la place et les traits emblématiques du chercheur / de la chercheuse étant donné que nous désirons mettre en rapport la recherche et les personnes qui s'adonnent à ce domaine. Ensuite, nous allons essayer de retracer les moments essentiels de la vulgarisation scientifique afin de mieux saisir l'impact de celle-ci à l'époque où s'impose le règne des machines.

LES CHERCHEURS / LES CHERCHEUSES : IDENTITÉ(S) CULTURELLE(S) ET SCIENTIFIQUE(S)

Le chercheur est, selon l'étymologie de ce mot, une personne qui cherche et qui s'informe. Cette définition nous fait penser que l'activité crée l'individu ou, tout au moins, lui offre le statut de connaisseur d'un certain domaine. Cette perspective nous semble simplifier trop les choses tout en nous offrant un regard unilatéral.

Dans notre analyse nous voulons montrer que le titre de « chercheur » recouvre une réalité plus complexe et donne naissance à un rapport identitaire riche.

Mélodie Faury, docteure en science de l'information et de la communication, a étudié, dans sa thèse, le rapport identitaire des chercheurs et des chercheuses aux sciences et à la culture. Elle a montré que ce rapport est une constante, un invariable, bien que celui-ci soit pluriel (ou, autrement dit ait plusieurs façons de s'articuler) selon l'approche et la personnalité de l'individu en question. Si nous essayons de synthétiser les facettes de ce rapport identitaire, nous devons, dans un premier temps, nous arrêter sur ce qu'on pourrait nommer l'attitude raisonnée du chercheur ou de la chercheuse :

J'ai ainsi constaté que la construction d'un *rapport identitaire et culturel aux sciences* passait par l'adhésion, ou au contraire par l'opposition, à une pratique et à un projet, celui de la recherche. (Faury, 2012, p. 15)

Choisir ou refuser un projet de recherche correspondra, en effet, selon nous, à la constitution d'un objectif qui suit les normes, les valeurs et les principes de la personne en question. Dans ce cas, l'identité du chercheur ou de la chercheuse devrait être en synergie avec celle de la vie quotidienne de l'individu ; le chercheur serait, par conséquent, une rallonge du citoyen.

Si ce premier regard porté sur le chercheur et sa recherche demande beaucoup de responsabilité et d'engagement, un deuxième type de rapport identitaire à la science et à la découverte circonscrit plutôt une identité attribuée par les autres ; le chercheur serait, dans cette optique, la construction de ce qui lui est extérieur : « l'attribution de l'identité de scientifique ou de chercheur était souvent fortement liée à la reconnaissance des collègues légitimes, devenant par là-même des pairs » (Faury, 2012, p. 15). L'identité de scientifique correspond alors à une scène de réception : on lui confère le titre en vertu de son travail ; par conséquent, c'est la recherche qui crée le chercheur.

Mais, si on suit l'étude de Faury, on constate qu'il y a une troisième situation : celle où l'identité du chercheur ne dépend plus de son travail, mais de l'éthique qu'il a acquise tout en essayant de mener à bien un projet :

Enfin, pour d'autres, ayant pratiqué la recherche à un moment ou l'autre de leur parcours, le rapport identitaire à la science se construirait par l'appropriation d'une attitude, de normes de comportement et par l'acquisition de compétences, plutôt que par la revendication d'un titre ou d'un qualificatif (Faury, 2012, p. 15)

Le savoir-vivre prendrait à ce moment-là la place du savoir-faire ou, autrement dit le savoir-faire découlerait du savoir-vivre.

Une autre perspective est offerte par Bernard Fallery et Florence Rodhain qui considèrent que la vulgarisation scientifique constitue un exercice de réflexion² ; le chercheur, tout en parlant de ses travaux comprend mieux ce qu'il a fait. Autrement dit, la vulgarisation scientifique fait partie du processus de recherche. De plus, ils observent que celle-ci est devenu récemment une discipline très prisée, présente dans le curriculum des universités de prestige :

Si, depuis Galilée ou Voltaire, la vulgarisation scientifique s'était faite principalement par l'écrit (Jurdant, 2009), la vulgarisation en tant que véritable genre de communication a aujourd'hui gagné sa place dans l'univers de la formation académique et professionnelle : le D U « Médiation scientifique innovante » à l'Université de Paris, le Master HSMS

« Histoire, sociologie et médiation des sciences » à Paris-Saclay, la Formation doctorale

« Oser la médiation scientifique » à Montpellier, le parcours de Master « Médiations scientifiques » à Toulouse, le Master « Médiation et communication des sciences et des techniques » à Bordeaux, le Master « Didactique des sciences » à Lyon.... Le métier de médiateur scientifique est devenu le cœur de nombreuses formations et l'École de la médiation, réunissant sept universités et associations, en propose même aujourd'hui un référentiel de compétences autour de « Animer des médiations, Concevoir des médiations, Enrichir ses connaissances et ses pratiques, Gérer des projets de médiation ». (Fallery & Rodhain, 2022, p. 3)

Reconnu comme métier autonome, le médiateur semble être devenu, de nos jours, indispensable pour le bon fonctionnement de la société. C'est-à-dire que la science fait partie inhérente de la vie quotidienne des gens et pour que ceux-ci soient bien informés on fait appel à la vulgarisation scientifique. Que ce soit chercheur par attribution, grâce à son travail ou grâce aux compétences acquises lors de son travail, le chercheur assure le lien entre le passé et le futur, entre la tradition et le progrès. D'où sa place essentielle dans toute société saine.

UNE HISTOIRE DE LA VULGARISATION SCIENTIFIQUE

La vulgarisation scientifique permet aux chercheurs d'établir des rapports avec le grand public, de lui faire part de leurs découvertes, rendant possible ainsi le

² « La médiation scientifique définit une situation de communication qui ne relève évidemment pas du simple schéma Emetteur > Récepteur, le chercheur comme la société sont à la fois EmetteurRécepteur. Le physicien Michel Crozon a eu cette belle formule « Je vulgarise pour mieux comprendre ce que je fais » (cité par B. Jurdant, 2007) et la position des universitaires dans la médiation scientifique relève donc à la fois de la vulgarisation et de la réflexivité. » (Fallery & Rodhain, 2022, p. 3)

progrès de la société dans son ensemble ; dans ce trio – chercheur, science et grand public – des liens divers s'établissent ; on doit noter que la vulgarisation scientifique constitue un sujet complexe, à plusieurs facettes, en fonction de l'angle dont on la regarde.

La science n'existe pas pour elle-même ; celle-ci est plutôt un outil qui vise le progrès, l'évolution de la société et le développement culturel. Cependant, comme le constate Sandrine Reboul-Touré, « longtemps, la science est restée dans la sphère des savants » (Reboul-Touré, 2012). Dans ce qui suit nous nous proposons de retracer le devenir de la médiation scientifique pour mieux comprendre sa place dans la société, ses fonctions et les éléments qui la composent.

Le premier vulgarisateur scientifique serait un homme de lettres, Fontenelle. Il écrit au XVII^e siècle, en 1686, *Entretiens sur la pluralité des mondes*, ouvrage qui avait comme but l'éducation des non-savants ; son objectif était d'instruire les gens, de leur expliquer comment fonctionnent les sciences. Cette prose scientifique, nommée également poésie scientifique, marque le début de la vulgarisation scientifique. Comme on peut le voir la science rencontre le grand public grâce à la littérature ; ce serait peut-être parce que cette dernière aime raconter, narrer et créer des histoires. Deux siècles plus tard, en XIX^e siècle,

apparaissent des revues de vulgarisation scientifique : *La Nature*, revue des sciences et de leurs applications aux arts et à l'industrie, 1873 ; *Eurêka*. Tribune des inventeurs. Revue illustrée de vulgarisation scientifique et industrielle, 1892 ; *L'étincelle électrique*, 1880 ; *L'ingénieur civil*. Journal d'application et de vulgarisation des découvertes les plus récentes, 1892 ; *Revue photographique de l'Ouest*, 1906 (Reboul-Touré, 2012).

La science s'approprie la médiation scientifique à l'heure du naturalisme (en littérature) ; on pourrait s'imaginer que ce geste représente une affirmation de sa puissance et de sa volonté d'entrer en dialogue avec le public non-savant. Un discours plus objectif, plus technique, s'y donne à lire. Le savant est parfois doublé d'un journaliste mais les événements perdent la dimension littéraire que Fontenelle leur a fourni. La démocratisation de la science va continuer dans les siècles suivants :

Les revues de vulgarisation sont aujourd'hui de plus en plus nombreuses. Voici quelques titres : *Ça m'intéresse*, premier numéro en 1981 ; *Ciel et espace*, 1945 ; *Cosinus*, 1999 ; *Pour la science*, 1977 ; *La recherche*, [1946], 1970 ; *Science et Avenir*, 1947 ; *Science et vie*, 1913 ; *Science et vie junior*, 1988. De nouvelles créations sont proposées dans les années 2000, avec une diversité au niveau des thématiques ou bien des publics : *Science et vie découvertes*, 2000 ; *Pharaon magazine*, 2001 ; *Cerveau et psycho*, 2003. Nous pensons que la liste reste ouverte. Ainsi, le discours de la vulgarisation

scientifique tient une place importante au sein des discours qui circulent dans notre société. La science est de plus en plus présente auprès des non-spécialistes. (Reboul-Touré, 2012).

Partie intégrante de la vie quotidienne, le discours de popularisation scientifique s'impose dans plusieurs domaines (astrologie, biologie, physique, informatique, etc.) ; celui-ci s'adresse à toutes les tranches d'âge, vu que le progrès est l'affaire de tous.

Plus tard, dans la société capitaliste, le scénario de la vulgarisation scientifique a subi des modifications. Broudoux et Chartron ont identifié les acteurs de cette activité tels qu'ils se présentent de nos jours :

Trois types d'acteurs majeurs sont engagés dans la communication scientifique : les auteurs individuels et leurs équipes qui fabriquent des objets de connaissance, les revues (organismes publics, privés ou public-privés) qui diffusent les savoirs après validation, les financeurs de la recherche (organismes variés) qui engrangent les résultats, constituent les bases de connaissance et orientent en conséquence les nouvelles subventions. (Broudoux & Chartron, 2009, p. 3-4)

Le chercheur n'est plus seul ; il fait partie d'un réseau qui détermine dans une certaine mesure le sujet de ses études et cela parce que toute communication des savoirs demande de l'argent, du financement. La recherche est, par conséquent, le résultat de la collaboration entre les chercheurs, les institutions qui assurent la publication de leurs travaux et les financeurs. On revient à l'idée de l'inscription des artistes (et, dans notre cas, des chercheurs) dans le champ social, thèse défendue par Pierre Bourdieu.

Quant à la relation que les médias entretiennent avec le grand public, la littérature de spécialité parle souvent d'une fonction de guidage :

Ainsi, dans leur rôle d'intermédiaire entre la science et le grand public, les médias ordinaires se donnent souvent une image de conseil en vie quotidienne (diététique, médecine ...), image qui semble s'accroître encore lorsque le média devient consultant (courrier des lecteurs, émission où les auditeurs téléphonent) ou qu'il s'agit de diffuser des savoir-faire techniques ou expérientiels (Moirand et Brasquet-Loubeyre, 1994). Mais la diffusion de savoir-faire n'est pas limitée à la vie quotidienne. (Moirand, 1997, p. 38)

Voulant montrer leur apport dans la société, les sciences se transforment, dans le dialogue qu'elles entament avec le grand public, dans des conseils pour mieux vivre. Sous le regard pragmatique des gens, la recherche devient, dans la vie quotidienne, un art de bien vivre.

PERSPECTIVES SUR LA VULGARISATION SCIENTIFIQUE À L'ÉPOQUE DE L'INTELLIGENCE ARTIFICIELLE

L'intérêt pour l'Intelligence Artificielle dans l'enseignement ne cesse d'augmenter de nos jours. Pourtant, pour bien comprendre l'impact de l'IA sur la vulgarisation scientifique il faudrait commencer par le rapport qui s'établit entre la technologie et le grand public, vu que l'IA est l'aboutissement du fonctionnement des machines.

Dans le contexte scolaire, les élèves entrent en contact avec le numérique bien avant d'être scolarisés ; autrement dit, leurs habitudes de se rapporter aux outils de la technologie sont déterminées par le contexte extrascolaire. Dans l'étude de Simon Collin, Nicolas Guichon et Jean Gabin Ntebutse, qui propose une approche sociologique du numérique en éducation, nous apprenons que

le rapport au numérique est multidimensionnel, mobile et évolutif, les usages numériques éducatifs gagneraient à être interprétés de façon holistique au sein de parcours d'usages numériques éducatifs, eux-mêmes enchâssés de façon complexe dans des activités et des réalités *offline* (Collin, Guichon & Ntebutse, 2015, p. 22)

Nous retenons de cette recherche le lien indissoluble entre les réalités offline et les activités en ligne. Il nous semble essentiel de nous rappeler que le numérique ne remplacera jamais la présence humaine tant qu'on parle des processus qui s'adressent à des êtres humains. L'Intelligence Artificielle visait, à ses débuts, l'individualisation de l'apprentissage, illusion qui a été détruite par les produits qui ont été créés, comme, par exemple, les MOOC ; ceux-ci mettent à disposition de l'étudiant.e la personnalisation de son apprentissage mais sont incapables de lui fournir « un projet émancipateur qui ne saurait se résumer à une 'segmentation de marché' » (Rouvroy, Berns, 2013, p. 176) (*Apud.* Petit, 2023) L'individualisation du processus d'apprentissage dépasse le choix des types de supports ou des sujets à étudier proposés par l'IA ; individualiser le trajet éducationnel constitue une tâche complexe où l'individu doit être pensé comme une partie d'un ensemble plutôt embrouillé.

Quant à la vulgarisation scientifique, les trois piliers du domaine identifiés par Broudoux & Chartron et mentionnés plus haut semblent se repositionner dans l'univers du web 2.0 :

Ces trois acteurs se sont appropriés la génération des services web 2.0 de façon différenciée : [...] - Les chercheurs et leurs équipes : individuelle et autoritative (blogs personnels), collective (wikis de projets d'équipes de recherche) (Bonetta, 2007). - Les acteurs éditoriaux : ouverture d'espaces collaboratifs pour les auteurs (social

bookmarking comme 2collab pour Elsevier par exemple, plateformes de blogs, de carnets de recherche pour Nature ou Revues.org, partage de références en ligne pour CiteUlike de Springer, etc). - Les financeurs de la recherche : portails thématiques, dépôts d'archives : articles, présentations, vidéos, etc. (Broudoux & Chartron, 2009, p. 4)

On remarque que le changement du contexte détermine des modifications dans la manière dont ces trois acteurs agissent. Chacun occupe l'espace virtuel à sa façon ; en outre, bien qu'Internet semble apporter plus de cohésion, nous avons l'impression que celui-ci isole les trois actants ou, tout au moins, celui-ci permet la création des brèches entre leur collaboration qui paraissait auparavant assez étroite.

Cependant, dans l'univers du savoir, Internet ne remplace pas les publications qui jouent le rôle du gardien de la validité scientifique. Dans une autre étude, Broudoux et Chartron ont montré que le contexte académique privilégie les communications en format papier :

Les modes de communication plus directs qui se sont installés progressivement dans les échanges entre chercheurs (forums, archives ouvertes, blogs) n'ont pas pour autant fait disparaître la médiation éditoriale, à savoir la médiation qui est associée à une validation intellectuelle et à une mise en circulation des écrits scientifiques. [...] De plus, les procédures d'évaluation de la recherche de plus en plus construites sur des indicateurs quantitatifs de publications dans des revues de pointe freinent cette circulation plus ouverte. Parler de désintermédiation dans l'édition scientifique serait donc une généralisation abusive. (Broudoux & Chatron, 2008, p. 4)

Si les publications en ligne deviennent parfois des sources fiables avec la politique du savoir démocratisé, la Science Ouverte, les documents format papier ne cessent d'être un outil très efficace dans la recherche, étant donné les problèmes de sécurité auxquels sont confrontés dans la plupart des cas les internautes.

Nous remarquons, toutefois, de nos jours, un engouement pour la diffusion de l'information scientifique sur des sites ou des plateformes en ligne, aspect rendu possible par le changement des attentes du public. Les interactions entre la technologie et la science devraient nous faire penser, selon Chérifa Boukacem-Zeghmouri et Hans Dillaerts, « aux fécondités qui existent entre ces deux pôles thématiques » (Boukacem-Zeghmouri & Dillaerts, 2018) plutôt qu'aux oppositions ou aux différences. La rencontre entre la science et la technologie devrait constituer un appui pour la découverte ; ce qui change c'est le format de l'information, le moyen de communication, voire le support, et non pas le contenu³, le résultat des

³ Toutefois, Evelyne Broudoux est plus radicale en ce qui concerne les changements apportés par la démocratisation du savoir par Internet ; selon elle, tout le paysage de la recherche a subi des modifications importantes, engendrant une nouvelle manière de penser le progrès dans tous les

recherches. Enfin, il y a également une question d'éthique du travail ; si les sites où sont publiés les résultats de recherches comprennent des publicités, on est confrontés à l'« économie de l'attention » (Citton, 2014 ; p. 33) ; en effet, nous tombons sur le rapport entre *visibilité* et *visualité*, articulé par Marian Poirson ; selon celui-ci on doit distinguer entre le « régime de *visibilité*, fondé sur l'ostentation et la sidération, et [le] régime de *visualité*, fondé sur la mobilisation et la réflexion » (Citton, 2014, p. 23). La diffusion des savoirs sur internet est fondée, à notre avis, sur la *visibilité* ; les informations qui y sont publiées réussissent à atteindre un public plus large que les publications en format papier. On distribue facilement les liens, les images et les autres contenus parus en ligne mais on perd parfois la profondeur de la réflexion. Internet encourage la vitesse, ce qui peut, dans certaines circonstances, impacter la manière dont on fait de la recherche.

La situation devient un peu plus complexe au moment où pour renvoyer à des concepts ou à d'autres références, le chercheur qui publie sur Internet choisit d'utiliser des hyperliens :

Le lien souligne un ou des mots au sens propre comme au sens figuré. Le mot est donc doublement utilisé/lu : il est considéré comme renvoyant à son référent et en même temps, on s'arrête sur le mot lui-même en tant que signe. Il semble donc que le lien hypertexte soit une marque sémiotique créant une modalisation autonymique. (Reboul-Touré, 2004)

Un double discours s'y met alors en place : le texte invite à un rapport entre intérieur et extérieur, ce qui accentue le régime de *visibilité* identifié par Poirson et, en même temps, accroît la dimension du réseau qui définit le support de la communication scientifique en ligne. Comme dans un jeu d'échos, les textes s'enchaînent de manière plus ou moins cohérente ; les lecteurs peuvent gagner en efficacité étant donné qu'ils ont la possibilité d'apprendre beaucoup d'informations en peu de temps mais ils perdent en profondeur ; sans réflexion, les informations

domaines : « L'écosystème scientifique à l'heure de la participation sur le web s'est modifié entraînant une diversification des pratiques de diffusion des résultats de la recherche (Chartron, Broudoux, 2009) et la mesure de la participation sociale (Broudoux, 2013). L'ouverture de l'environnement scientifique du web communicationnel a aussi autorisé la promotion du genre éditorial du blog qui s'est imposé comme espace de discussion pour des jeunes chercheurs.e.s en sciences humaines et sociales (Mayeur, 2017). Enfin, la croissance des données interrogeables et l'interopérabilité des références scientifiques modifient les supports de diffusion eux-mêmes qui ne se cantonnent plus à des articles dans des revues, l'article n'étant déjà plus – pour certaines disciplines – qu'un modèle à remplir servant à divulguer des résultats de calculs sur des données dynamiques ». (Broudoux, 2018)

arrivent à être vues comme des évidences, des choses qui vont d'elles-mêmes. On y perd l'étonnement de la science, de la découverte.

De la technologie nous glissons en peu de temps à l'Intelligence Artificielle ; utilisée tout d'abord dans le milieu militaire et industriel⁴, la technologie ne prend pas en considération, dans le traitement des textes, à savoir dans le processus de traduction, les aspects linguistiques, s'appuyant de manière exclusive sur les mots. Laissant de côté l'apport humain dans le travail avec les mots,

en 1956, à l'école d'été de Dartmouth, on assiste à la naissance de l'intelligence artificielle. Posant comme conjecture que tout aspect de l'intelligence humaine peut être décrit avec assez de précision pour qu'une machine le simule, les figures les plus marquantes de l'époque (McCarthy, Minsky, Newell et Simon) y discutent des possibilités de créer des programmes d'ordinateur « *se comportant intelligemment* ». Ce point de vue mène au *cognitivism* qui a fortement influencé la psychologie, la linguistique, l'informatique, la philosophie... (Sabah, 2017)

Si on suit le raisonnement qui mène à la création de l'Intelligence Artificielle nous constatons que celle-ci représente, en effet, une copie de la manière humaine d'agir et de penser. Luc Julia ose affirmer qu'en effet « l'intelligence artificielle n'existe pas » (Julia, 2019, p. 5) ; il propose en revanche le terme d' « intelligence augmentée » (Julia, 2019, p. 16). La machine commence à imiter l'homme ; certes, celle-ci a besoin d'une mémoire très vaste afin de pouvoir identifier efficacement les informations nécessaires dans certains contextes ; de plus, faute de capacité d'adaptation, les machines demandent un grand nombre de données pour être à même de trouver la réponse à un problème. Selon la typologie des procédures d'enseignement du point de vue de la matière à apprendre, l'Intelligence Artificielle se situe, la plupart des cas, dans

une procédure de classification supervisée. C'est-à-dire que son objectif est de classer des éléments selon des informations connues, des labels, qui définissent strictement à quel groupe doit appartenir tel ou tel observation. (Maizières, 2016, p. 14)

En outre, sans raisonnement, l'IA favorise l'infox, aspect visible dans tous les domaines :

L'IA accroît le stock de connaissances beaucoup plus vite que le corps social ne peut l'absorber et le digérer. Elle brouille la frontière entre réel et irréel. Faux documents,

⁴ « À ses débuts, l'informatique est surtout industrielle et militaire, et les commanditaires des grands projets (essentiellement américains) de l'époque, suivant les raisonnements de Turing, orientent ceux-ci vers le déchiffrement de documents russes [...] » (Sabah, 2017)

vidéos parfaitement réalistes, « environnements ultra-immersifs », peuvent fausser le débat politique. (Laurent, 2019, p. 117)

La vulgarisation scientifique dans l'univers de l'IA demande, par conséquent, beaucoup d'esprit critique ; le grand public devrait faire la différence entre la bonne et la mauvaise information, entre le vrai et le faux, entre la source fiable et l'infox.

CONCLUSION

La recherche joue un rôle essentiel dans le développement des sociétés. La découverte du feu, l'invention de l'agriculture, de l'imprimerie, des vaccins etc. ont rendu possible le monde dans lequel nous vivons. Qu'on parle de révolution ou d'évolution, ces changements ont eu un impact considérable sur notre manière d'aller plus loin, de progresser et de mener une vie plus aisée qu'auparavant.

Cependant l'apparition de l'Intelligence Artificielle pose le problème de la liberté ; si notre identité devient une pièce d'échange dans un jeu dont on ne connaît pas très bien les règles, nous devons apprendre à établir des limites entre ce qu'on gagne et ce qu'on perd. La dimension éthique de l'utilisation de l'Intelligence Artificielle est un aspect à envisager quand on souhaite aller vivre mieux. De toute façon, l'avenir correspond à la cohabitation entre l'homme et la machine. Apprenons, donc, à vivre en harmonie et en équilibre.

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Aspects of Using Digital Technologies in the Context of Teaching English for Specific Purposes

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Abstract: Education has been evolving and transforming rapidly for the past decades. Therefore, teachers need to address certain requirements of professional knowledge and to search for their appropriate answers to the following questions: How could one teach better in the context of foreign languages for academic and specific purposes in the 21st century? What kind of competencies should be developed both in teaching and learning? What kind of digital technologies could be used to enhance students' learning and not diminish their accomplishments? so that they should reshape their own teaching in the most appropriate and successful manner. Opportunities for students to learn independently, collaboratively, and to be able to use critical thinking and inquiry-based learning must be provided through the learning environment they get actively involved in through traditional as well as modern teaching and learning strategies. No one can deny the wide range of educational digital resources that teachers and students can use in their specific field. This article investigates the way in which available digital technologies support the educational process in the context of English for specific purposes in the field of engineering. By successfully incorporating digital technologies into the process, teachers could design a more interactive, inclusive, and independent learning experience, preparing engineering students for the opportunities and challenges of their future professional settings.

Keywords: *English for Specific Purposes, teaching, blended learning, digital technologies*

INTRODUCTION

In the digital age we all live in, people acknowledge the important role of online learning in education that breaks down barriers of space or time. During the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, educational institutions at the secondary or tertiary level needed to develop and apply new pedagogical strategies, procedures, and resources so that to face the challenges of remote learning effectively. Thus, it requires ongoing planning, guidance, monitoring, support, and resources to enhance the quality and inclusivity of education via digital technologies that can facilitate the sharing of knowledge.

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The purpose of our paper is to describe how the usage of digital technologies during language courses for specific purposes reestablishes the teaching and learning process after the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of opportunities, benefits and challenges at large and in the specific context of the 1st year students at the Technical University of Cluj- Napoca, (TUCN), Faculty of Engineering, Baia Mare, Romania.

A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

“National and European policies acknowledge the need to equip all citizens with the necessary competences to use digital technologies critically and creatively” (Punie, Redecker, 2017, p.12). According to the UNESCO document named “Reimagining Our Futures Together: A New Social Contract for Education”

“Digital technologies, tools and platforms can be bent in the direction of supporting human rights, enhancing human capabilities, and facilitating collective action in the directions of peace, justice, and sustainability. To state the obvious, digital literacy and access are a basic right in the twenty-first century; without them it is increasingly difficult to participate civically and economically. One of the painful realizations of the global pandemic is that those with connectivity and access to digital skills were able to continue to learn remotely while schools closed down [...], whereas those without such access and skills missed out on learning and the other benefits physical learning institutions bring. As a result of this digital divide, gaps in educational opportunity and outcomes between and within nations augmented” (UNESCO, 2021, p. 43).

The European Commission has also adopted an official document entitled the “Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027” which “seeks to address the digital divide and inequities in education and training, and highlights the potential of technology to facilitate more accessible, safe, flexible, personalised and learner-centred teaching and learning”; thus “every European citizen should have access to digital education which enables them to develop the knowledge, skills and competences needed for active participation in today’s increasingly digital societies” (Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027, 2020). Whereas the “European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade” emphasises “the need to promote and support efforts to equip all education and training institutions with digital connectivity, infrastructure and tools” due to the fact that “people are at the centre of the digital transformation in the European Union. Technology should serve and benefit all Europeans and empower them to pursue

their aspirations, in full security and respect of their fundamental rights” (European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade, 2022).

Furthermore, the 2024 Digital Decade Eurobarometer report on the EU people’s perceptions of the role that digital technologies will play in their lives highlights a very strong impact of digitalisation; almost three-quarters of Europeans (73%) state that their daily public and private services have become easier due to digital technologies, including 19% who say it is making their life much easier. However, 23% respondents consider that their lives have become more difficult due to digitalisation. 83% of the participants express the idea that digital technologies will be important to connect online at a personal as well as a professional level by 2030. In a number of areas, digital technologies are expected to be important by 2030: (79%) healthcare services, (76%) online business (e.g. shopping and selling) or transport services, (75%) education and training opportunities, (74%) online content usage and design, etc. Around 69% of the respondents consider that digital technologies are suitable in a flexible workplace setting (Digital Decade Eurobarometer, 2024).

TPACK THEORY OF TEACHING

Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (Mishra, Koehler, 2006) has been described as a theory of teaching implying subject knowledge, content variety, pedagogical knowledge, strategies teaching, and technologies that support successful teaching and learning. TPCK, or TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge), is designed as a dynamic model that is influenced by many contextual factors, which highlight the benefits and limitations of educators who include the interdependent and connected domains of content, pedagogy, and technology in their profession:

1. Content Knowledge (CK) describes the teacher’s knowledge of the subject they must teach.
2. Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) encompasses the educator’s understanding of teaching methods and theories in order to provide the most suitable context for lesson design and students’ learning.
3. Technological Knowledge (TK) describes the teacher’s level of acknowledging the range of digital technologies available to them in a learning environment.

One of the drawbacks of this framework is the fact that students may struggle to engage with the content if they are not comfortable or proficient with a

technology tool. Nevertheless, teachers might reflect on the new connections that are established by implementing technologies in the delivery of their subject knowledge. When technological knowledge (TK) and content knowledge (CK) intersect, they create the first link among the three areas under discussion: the technological content knowledge (TCK) that illustrates the educator's awareness of the advantages and limitations of technology usage in teaching a specific content. The second connection describes the technological pedagogical knowledge (TPK), or in other words, how teaching and learning can be influenced by the appropriate choice of digital tools and resources during a course in order to reach certain learning outcomes. In addition, pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) highlights the best practices for teaching a certain subject, which must expand in order to include ways of selecting and using a wide range of educational technologies appropriately within the context of different content areas and teaching approaches (adapted from <https://nearpod.com>). The authors of the TPACK theory, Koehler, M. J. and Mishra, P. point out that teachers must know "how teaching and learning can change when particular technologies are used in particular ways" (Koehler, Mishra, 2009, p. 64). Consequently, educators must acknowledge the essential relationships established among the three concepts of technology, pedagogy, and content and their dynamic interactions throughout the educational process.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND BLENDED LEARNING

In the "European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators: DigCompEdu", the concept of *digital technologies* "is employed as an umbrella term for digital resources and devices" (Redecker, Punie, 2017, p. 27); thus, it implies "any product or service that can be used to create, view, distribute, modify, store, retrieve, transmit and receive information electronically in a digital form" and it comprises "computer networks (e.g. the internet) and any online service supported by these (e.g. websites, social networks, online libraries, etc.); any kind of software (e.g. programmes, apps, virtual environments, games), whether networked or installed locally; any kind of hardware or device (e.g. personal computers, mobile devices, digital whiteboards); and any kind of digital content, e.g. files, information, data" (Redecker, Punie, 2017, p.90). Digital natives are constantly interested in handling their gadgets that can be easily transformed into learning aids, enhancing students' engagement in their own learning.

"In the past, technology has predominately been used to source and consume information, whereas today's learners have become particularly adept at creating and

collaboratively developing content for a wide variety of purposes, for example so-called Web 2.0 tools such as blogs, forums and wikis” (Motteram, 2013, p. 23).

The main goal of tech use is to expand learning possibilities and enable language learning through different tools at different times. Therefore, if a particular technology proved effective for our instruction during the pandemic, it is likely that we can successfully integrate it into an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course. Considering our students’ opinions, the entire educational process is more motivating when digital technologies are adequately integrated by their educators in the delivery of the course. According to Jeremy Harmer (2013)

“If you walk into some classrooms around the world, you will see fixed data projectors, interactive whiteboards (IBWs), built-in speakers for audio material that is delivered directly from a computer hard disk (rather than from a tape recorder), and computers with round-the clock Internet access” (Harmer, 2013, p. 175).

Educational platforms are web-based software systems that administer online courses, providing free and easy access to the participants via different smart devices (mobile phones, laptops, tablets, PC computers). Generally, students do not need to possess advanced digital skills in order to deal with course assignments; however, they have to perform technological tasks, such as word processing, PowerPoint presentations, writing emails/ posts, etc. Characteristics such as chat rooms, discussion forums, surveys, or quizzes provide the opportunity for teachers and their students to communicate and share course content online, to develop critical thinking and to practice reflection. The online activities allow teachers and students to appreciate the benefits of interaction (e.g. announcements, notifications, chat messages, polls, forums) so that learners should turn into proactive participants to their own learning experience.

Blended learning is considered a continuous process that incorporates online learning strategies into a formal learning environment. Collis and Moonen (2001) define blended learning as a flexible perspective on course design including face-to-face interaction and an online component that turns into an addition to conventional learning. A proper combination of face-to-face instruction and computer-based components (online and offline activities/materials) allows educators to use different teaching techniques and students to easily approach the online courses according to their learning schedule (Tomlinson, Whittaker, 2013).

Incorporating technology into the classroom impacts the way content material is taught. In order to reach a high level of effectiveness in a blended language course, certain issues must be addressed, such as the attitude towards digital technologies

of all parties involved, their awareness of the course objectives and of the modalities to achieve them, as well as successful organisation efforts on the part of the university management for the course implementation, including comprehensive guidance, technical support, and monitoring. Both teachers and students must learn how to take control of these technologies because “the incorporation of technology into school- wide teaching pedagogy ... means that students will also develop digital literacy skills at the same time as acquiring a second language” (Stanley, 2013, p. 58). Nowadays, our students spend most of their spare time playing computer games, using the Internet for social networking or research; consequently, language teaching tasks that require them to write e-mails, to select and discuss multimedia materials on a given topic, or to set up their own blog, allow them to practice their digital skills, and empower them to be part of a globalised world. With technology, students’ roles may change during a course, “they become engaged as critical reviewers, technical support, and learning partners”. When facing technical problems, students usually ask for help from their colleagues; “this benefits the teacher and students. A problem can be solved without teacher input, and students practice a key life skill: problem solving” (Hamilton, 2015, p. 15).

DISCUSSING THE USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN A SPECIFIC ESP CONTEXT

Digital technologies promote student-centred learning due to the fact that online learning provides a path to inclusion for students with specific needs; they give students more agency as they can work at their own pace, fulfilling assignments whenever and wherever they are able to focus best. They also provide universities with flexibility in terms of time and place, and they improve learning effectiveness and strengthen communication among the participants. In ESP courses students’ needs, authentic materials and tasks are essential; therefore, teachers have integrated the technology their learners are familiar with in their profession into their language courses, e.g., emails, presentations, e-learning platforms, etc.

Our teaching experience in the use of a Moodle e-learning platform during ESP practical courses at the Faculty of Engineering (TUCN) since 2020 will be described in this particular subchapter.

A virtual platform/ VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) allows course content to be uploaded by the teacher, which can be accessed by learners on the Internet, “they cannot only see course content, such as documents, audio and video

lectures, but also do activities such as quizzes, questionnaires and tests, or use communication tools like discussion forums or text and audio chat” (Dudeney, Hockly, 2007, p. 137). The learning management platform under discussion is designed to provide participants with a secure and integrated system to create a personalised learning environment.

“Using face-to-face time for confidence building, socialising, group activities and critical input sessions makes efficient use of group communication opportunities, whilst research, discussion, reflection and project work can more productively be done online” (Dudeney, Hockly, 2013, p. 81).

The word Moodle is an acronym for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment. It is provided freely as Open-Source software; thus, it can be customised to specific needs; it can be used as a repository of materials or to share the students’ work accomplished during the face-to-face sessions. Participation in online courses offers the possibility to share opinions or experiences with peers and teachers; consequently, participants can collaborate within an engaging learning environment. Moodle gives teachers a better overview of the course content, enabling them to check students’ online attendance, and participation or students’ progress throughout the course. However, the initial course landing page can incorporate a variety of resources and activities, which means that this page can become very long, difficult to navigate, and slow to load. Course content may contain different activities and resources, e.g., assignments, glossaries, quizzes, polls, databases, etc. Asynchronous forum discussions may incorporate theoretical discussions of specific topics. Glossaries represent lists of definitions that are built collaboratively, whereas databases may include a collection of digital photos or references for students to operate with. User log reports reveal detailed evidence of participation; visual tools such as graphs display overall activity statistics. On the one hand, making all course modules available enables learners to manage their time in a way that suits them; on the other hand, it can lead to some participants, who are ahead in their work, having no one to interact with.

The course content for the 1st year students in Computer Science and Applied Electronics is structured into fourteen modules which only course participants can access. The first module introduces the course requirements, the structure and functions of the e-learning platform, the main topics to be approached during the semester, details about the final examination, etc. The following twelve modules display a specific ESP reading comprehension topic in the form of written text and video materials, followed by a selection of exercises related to the particular topic. The Moodle platform accommodates exercises such as multiple choice, cloze

exercises, matching exercises, open-ended questions, and so on. Students are able to read the text multiple times and redo the exercises until they feel comfortable with the outcomes because, after each attempt, feedback is provided automatically. When designing a test, the teacher has the possibility to select any question or set of questions from the so-called question bank, choose a certain score for each assessment item. After the students finish answering each item of the test, they submit their answers and they receive their final scores instantly as well as feedback on how well they solved each exercise in order to become aware of how to improve their future performance. The last module includes the end-term examination, when students must take a written test on the Knowledge. Base e-learning platform (<https://kb.cunbm.utcluj.ro>). The written paper includes a variety of evaluation items related to the ESP course content such as: multiple choice exercises, gap-filling exercises, matching words or phrases with definitions/ synonyms or matching parts of sentences etc.

The employment of the Moodle platform is not restricted to the classroom environment only, as it can be used by students who cannot attend courses regularly due to objective reasons (working full time or part time, medical leave, etc.) who want to improve their level of foreign language competence by practising the course content in their own time and at their own pace. One main disadvantage in using the e-platform is the fact it requires above average technical skills; consequently, teachers must be trained in designing online course content in order to be able to use the features of the platform effectively and students must be familiarised with its features and specifications.

Using digital technologies in the language classroom should follow certain steps. It is the educator's duty to establish a set of guidelines, including rules and expectations for improved classroom management, in order to optimize content delivery pace. Furthermore, student interaction and engagement must be encouraged for a better learning experience because use of technology may sometimes lead to passive learning. Appropriate and varied technological tools help students to keep a high level of motivation during and beyond the class. Facilitating free content knowledge can be ensured by providing access to copies of video, audio, or other materials used in class for reference so that individual learning styles should be matched. All students must get equal opportunities to get involved in technology-mediated lessons. However, tech overuse might distract the students' focus from understanding the course content and the assignments they need to perform. There are also certain challenges to distinguish regarding the use of digital technologies, including high infrastructure and maintenance costs; technical failure;

limited access in economically challenged areas; expensive training; rejection of employing teaching and learning technological tools (Birajdar et al., 2020).

In order to assess our students' attitude towards the relevance of an online learning environment during the ESP course a feedback form is designed and administered to students at the end of the 2nd semester. The questionnaire consists of five multiple choice questions; there is only one choice that respondents may select out of the three answers: YES/ NO/ MAYBE for each question. The target group consists of fifty 1st year students from the Faculty of Engineering, TUCN, who study Computer Science and Applied Electronics. The purpose of the questionnaire about students' views on the use of digital technologies in teaching and learning is to acknowledge the dynamic relationship between traditional teaching-learning strategies and the employment of modern technology during the language course.

Table 1. Students' Questionnaire on their Attitude regarding the Use of Online Learning during an ESP Course

Questions	YES	NO	MAYBE
1. Do you frequently use digital technologies for course-related tasks?	46	2	2
2. Do you think that the e-learning platform (Knowledge. Base) is easy to use during our ESP course?	42	6	2
3. Do you consider the Knowledge. Base platform (https://kb.cunbm.utcluj.ro) useful during the English language learning process?	35	2	13
4. Do digital technologies successfully support effective foreign language learning?	46	2	2
5. Would you consider using traditional strategies as well as digital technologies in your learning?	48	0	2

The respondents' answers indicate a positive attitude towards incorporating online learning into a face-to-face language course; most of them underline the idea that a blended course is an effective and useful approach in language learning. Students' positive comments regarding the online course content provided by the Moodle e-learning platform expressed in a group discussion after filling in the feedback form highlight the value of reflective thinking and the flexibility in handling the course content and requirements in terms of time and place. If students miss a module, they can easily access the online course and study that particular unit individually according to their own schedule. In order to accommodate all students' needs in dealing with technological aspects, universities should provide technical support on how to use e-learning platforms. It is important to consider students as a powerful resource in a language course because they enrich the learning environment with their own personal experiences, interests, knowledge

and motivation. Some of the issues raised by our students during the feedback session reflect certain difficulties that may occur in using technology within the language course for specific purposes. For example, online information is not always reliable; students might not know how to handle and filter it correctly according to their needs; they may feel overwhelmed by the load of information or cannot choose the most appropriate form of their search due to personal limitations regarding technical skills or use of digital resources. As technology is completely woven into our lives, we need to create a sense of presence of being together for teachers and students that must be relevant and effective within the onsite learning environment and to keep a fine and functional balance between traditional and modern approaches in teaching and learning. Teachers should develop their own digital literacy skills in order to properly choose valuable digital resources, aiming at teaching their students how to handle the online environment efficiently without getting distracted or throughout the learning process. By integrating technology into a language course, students do not just use a tool for learning and connecting, but they also practice skills they need throughout their lifelong development.

CONCLUSIONS

Our lives have been definitely influenced by the global digital revolution. Digital technology “provides ample opportunities for creative digital participation” (Laakso et al., 2021, p.2) involving the use and design of digital tools by collaborative efforts; consequently, one can notice subtle or more profound changes in the way people communicate, work, or learn. Implementing technology in the framework of teaching English for specific purposes has turned this field into an innovative, challenging, but at the same time rewarding experience for both teachers and students.

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Herramientas digitales en clase de ELE

ALINA-LUCIA NEMEȘ¹, VICTORIA JUMBEI²

Resumen: Dado que la sociedad del siglo XXI está experimentando transformaciones sin precedentes, es crucial preparar a los jóvenes para que piensen de manera crítica y creativa con tal de adaptarse más fácilmente a los inevitables cambios y poder integrarse más tarde en el mercado laboral. Ante el cambio definitivo en cuanto a las habilidades requeridas, debemos desarrollar competencias (conocimientos, habilidades y actitudes) que les permitan enfrentar desafíos cada vez más complejos y satisfacer las demandas de una sociedad diversificada en contextos en permanente evolución. La enseñanza es un proceso complejo que debe ser variado y tiene que relacionarse con las necesidades cotidianas, personales, académicas y profesionales del alumnado, considerando el entorno o la experiencia mental, social, física, emocional, práctica, conductual, experiencial, cultural y espiritual, lo cual supone una adaptación al contexto actual de desarrollo informático y tecnológico. La tecnología se ha arraigado en nuestra vida diaria y, en consecuencia, una generación entera tiene otras formas de percibir la información y de aprender por lo general.

A pesar de la controversia relacionada con el traslado de algunas tareas al medio digital, consideramos que el futuro no se puede imaginar sin esta perspectiva innovadora. Por esta razón, los docentes deben adaptarse siguiendo el adelanto de las herramientas digitales para ofrecer un aprendizaje significativo y fomentar la autonomía en el estudio de una lengua extranjera. Es importante utilizar las TIC con tal de ofrecer una diversidad de actividades y de enfoques didácticos, integrados de modo armonioso en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje para el desarrollo de las diversas competencias generales: comprensión oral y escrita, expresión oral y escrita, interacción y mediación, y, al mismo tiempo, de la competencia digital.

En el siguiente estudio vamos a proporcionar unos ejemplos de uso de herramientas digitales o de aplicación de las nuevas tecnologías en clase de ELE, a partir de un sitio *web* personal, creado con este propósito, entre otros instrumentos digitales, ofreciendo una metodología de aprendizaje experiencial que pueda servir como punto de partida para otras actividades que se practiquen en otros entornos didácticos digitales.

Palabras clave: *enseñanza, aprendizaje, inteligencia artificial, herramientas digitales, TIC*

INTRODUCCIÓN

En el contexto de las profundas transformaciones que experimenta la sociedad del siglo XXI, es fundamental preparar a los jóvenes para que desarrollen

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un pensamiento crítico y creativo, facilitando su adaptación a los inevitables cambios y su futura inserción en el mercado laboral. Dado el cambio radical en las habilidades demandadas, es esencial fomentar competencias que engloben conocimientos, habilidades y actitudes, con el fin de enfrentar retos cada vez más complejos y responder a las exigencias de una sociedad diversa y en constante evolución. La enseñanza, como proceso dinámico, debe ser variada y estar alineada con las necesidades personales, académicas y profesionales de los estudiantes, considerando los diferentes aspectos de su entorno: mental, social, físico, emocional, cultural, práctico y espiritual. Esto implica una adaptación al contexto actual marcado por el desarrollo informático y tecnológico. La tecnología, ahora integrada en nuestra vida cotidiana, ha transformado la manera en que una generación entera percibe y procesa la información, modificando también sus formas de aprender. Se trata de la generación que ha crecido en la era digital, llamada "nativa digital", o sea, como la llama Lara, "*Net Generation*" (Lara, 2005, p. 87), que no puede concebir un mundo sin ordenadores o sin conexión a internet. Es precisamente el aspecto que facilita la labor del docente para la introducción de las nuevas tecnologías en sus clases (ver también Kumar, 2009, p. 309).

A pesar de la controversia relacionada con el traslado de algunas tareas al medio digital, consideramos que el futuro no se puede imaginar sin esta perspectiva innovadora. Por esta razón, los docentes deben adaptarse siguiendo el adelanto de las herramientas digitales para ofrecer un aprendizaje significativo y fomentar la autonomía en el estudio de una lengua extranjera. Es importante utilizar las TIC (tecnologías de la información y de la comunicación) con tal de ofrecer una diversidad de actividades y de enfoques didácticos, integradas de modo armonioso en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje para el desarrollo de las diversas competencias generales: comprensión oral y escrita, expresión oral y escrita, interacción y mediación, y, al mismo tiempo, de la competencia digital. Teniendo en cuenta la popularidad de las herramientas digitales y el interés creciente en este sentido, las casas editoriales han publicado manuales de ELE (español como lengua extranjera) con extensiones digitales a los libros en formato impreso, destinados a todos los niveles de competencias lingüísticas, desde los principiantes hasta los avanzados. Estos manuales completan la actividad didáctica, pero muchas de estas versiones son accesibles a base del código de usuario, escrito en la portada interior del libro físico, pero solo por un período de tiempo limitado. Además de la desventaja de la caducidad, muchas actividades presentan varios ítems, cada uno en una diapositiva diferente, lo que supone recorrer obligatoriamente todos los elementos para pasar al siguiente paso, sin permitir la vuelta atrás o saltar alguno

en función de las necesidades diversas del alumnado y de las diferencias entre ellos. Este aspecto tiene una justificación, en primer lugar, se evita que se copien / que se descarguen los ejercicios completos y, por lo tanto, se impide infringir los derechos de autor haciendo copias, compartiendo o volviendo a publicar los contenidos de forma no autorizada. Para evitar estos inconvenientes, consideramos que los docentes deberían crear sus propios materiales, adaptados a las necesidades y los intereses del público meta.

En nuestro caso, utilizamos herramientas digitales como pizarras inteligentes, proyectores y dispositivos móviles, lo que nos lleva a buscar aplicaciones accesibles desde cualquier plataforma.

A los sistemas de gestión del aprendizaje ya conocidos, como *Microsoft Teams*, *Moodle*, *Google Classroom*, etc., donde se pueden recoger todos los materiales necesarios para la clase, las tareas que se pueden resolver en línea, o conversaciones entre el docente y sus estudiantes y/o entre los estudiantes, tratamos de integrar otras plataformas y aplicaciones que permitan la importación y exportación de contenido, que ofrezcan al docente estadísticas relacionadas con la resolución de las tareas, con el progreso del alumnado, para que se pueda ofrecer, luego, un *feedback* personalizado.

La integración de un simple *chat*, un foro de discusiones o un grupo para la clase de ELE, para la comunicación y el aprendizaje no formales, fomenta la comunicación, la colaboración, el intercambio de informaciones y de ideas, motivando a los estudiantes. Además, tiene como ventajas la gratuidad y el acceso fácil desde cualquier dispositivo conectado a internet, como teléfono inteligente, tableta, ordenador, etc. El inconveniente se relaciona con el tiempo que el docente debe dedicar para controlar lo que se publica para evitar la transmisión de informaciones inadecuadas para los estudiantes. Cuando se trata de un grupo creado únicamente para transmitir informaciones, el docente puede configurarlo de tal manera que solo el administrador tenga la posibilidad de transmitir mensajes. Al igual, el administrador ve quién ha recibido el mensaje y quién lo ha leído. Sin embargo, los estudiantes tienen el permiso de reaccionar al contenido utilizando emoticonos o emoji, que, según el *Diccionario de la lengua española* (2022) de la Real Academia española, es una "pequeña imagen o icono digital que se usa en las comunicaciones electrónicas para representar una emoción, un objeto, una idea, etc."

Entre las ventajas del uso de las TIC en clase de ELE mencionamos el incremento de la motivación y de la creatividad de los estudiantes, la flexibilidad (ver también Wonacott, 2001, p. 3) en cuanto a la posibilidad de combinar una diversidad de estrategias y recursos didácticos, con tal de mejorar las diferentes

habilidades de comunicación: la comprensión oral y/o escrita, la expresión oral y/o escrita, la interacción, o hasta desarrollar el pensamiento crítico (Saloman & Globerson, 1987, p. 625).

Teniendo presentes estos beneficios, en el siguiente estudio vamos a proporcionar unos ejemplos de uso de herramientas digitales en clase de ELE o de aplicación de las nuevas tecnologías en clase de ELE, a partir de un sitio *web* personal, creado con este propósito, entre otros instrumentos digitales, ofreciendo una metodología de aprendizaje experiencial que pueda servir como punto de partida para otras actividades que se practiquen en otros entornos didácticos digitales. La idea de comenzar a trabajar en el proyecto surgió en noviembre de 2021, durante un curso de formación organizado por la Agregaduría de España en Bucarest. Aunque ya habíamos tenido contacto previo con diversas herramientas digitales, este curso marcó un punto de inflexión, ya que nos permitió abordar su uso de una manera más estructurada y práctica. Hasta ese momento, habíamos utilizado las herramientas digitales de forma aislada, sin integrarlas en un enfoque pedagógico completo. Sin embargo, durante el curso de formación mencionado anteriormente, se nos planteó el desafío de unir estos recursos y emplearlos de forma coherente para mejorar el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje. Nos dimos cuenta de que no se trataba solo de conocer las herramientas, sino de crear una estrategia que hiciera su uso eficiente, significativo y alineado con los objetivos educativos. Fue en ese contexto donde empezamos a ver el potencial de diseñar un proyecto que integrara distintas tecnologías de manera sistemática, con el objetivo de ofrecer a los estudiantes una experiencia más dinámica, interactiva y motivadora. La formación no solo nos proporcionó los conocimientos necesarios para manejar las herramientas, sino también la inspiración para pensar en cómo aplicarlas de manera efectiva dentro del aula. Así, dicho curso fue el catalizador que nos impulsó a desarrollar un proyecto educativo más innovador, adaptado a las necesidades actuales y centrado en el uso de las TIC como un recurso clave para el aprendizaje.

El sitio *web* <https://sites.google.com/view/paginasextosecundaria/2021-2022> (actualización 2024), que representa el punto de partida de nuestro estudio, fue creado para el sexto grado de secundaria (según la distribución de los grados en la enseñanza general de Rumanía) por Victoria Jumbei, profesora del Liceo Teórico "Mihai Eminescu" de Cluj-Napoca, Rumanía, donde el español se estudia como primera lengua extranjera, como asignatura obligatoria o complementaria o como curso optativo organizado según la decisión de la escuela, con un total de cuatro horas semanales. El recorrido previo en el estudio del español se desglosa de la

siguiente manera: clase preparatoria, primer y segundo grado, 1 hora a la semana, tercero y cuarto, 3 horas a la semana, respectivamente quinto y sexto, 4 horas a la semana, lo que sitúa al alumnado del sexto grado a un nivel lingüístico A2 (según los descriptores del *Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza, evaluación*, 2002, y del *Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza, evaluación. Volumen complementario*, 2021).

Este portal es una fuente relevante de modelos de actividades de lengua, de español como lengua extranjera (ELE), de nivel A2, elaborado con la ayuda de diferentes herramientas digitales. Para la realización de las actividades publicadas en este sitio *web* hemos usado algunos contenidos del manual de ELE de la clase, respectivamente de Bueso, I., Cerdeira, P., Gelabert, M.J., Gómez, R., Menéndez, M., Oliva, C., Pardo, I., Romero, A., Ruiz de Gauna, M. & Vázquez, R. *Club Prisma A2*, Madrid: Edinumen, 2017, pero también actividades de elaboración propia. Los temas propuestos son: "¡Cómo mola el primer día!", "¿Dónde estás?", "¿Cómo te fue?", "¿Qué habéis hecho?", "¡Qué curioso!", "¡Reacciona!", "¡Al abordaje!", "¡De fábula!", "El futuro en tus manos" y "¿Puedo?", con referencia a: "Primer día de cole", "Verbos de movimiento", "Ropa y calzado", "Jerga juvenil", "Presente irregular", "El saludo en España", "Viaje a Santander", "Toledo", "Pantalla grande o pantalla pequeña". Cabe señalar que esta página *web* no recopila datos personales de los estudiantes, tampoco se requiere la creación de una cuenta o una autenticación previa, evitándose los eventuales problemas relacionados con el *Reglamento general de protección de datos (RGPD) (UE) 2016/679* del Parlamento Europeo y del Consejo de 27 de abril de 2016, publicado por la Comisión Europea (https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-topic/data-protection/data-protection-eu_es, el 31.07.2024).

INTEGRACIÓN DE HERRAMIENTAS DIGITALES – PROPUESTAS DIDÁCTICAS

Para empezar, debemos apuntar que las TIC se pueden utilizar desde los niveles básicos de enseñanza-aprendizaje de los idiomas extranjeros, más exactamente desde los principiantes absolutos o el nivel A1 del *Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas: aprendizaje, enseñanza, evaluación* (2002 y 2021). Por ejemplo, se utilizan imágenes que se asocian con las palabras y, en ocasiones, se añade también el artículo definido correspondiente, como en el siguiente modelo:



Imagen 1. Ejercicio de vocabulario

Fuente: <https://www.profedelee.es/actividad/ropa-prendas-de-vestir/>, el 10.07.2024

Al hacer clic en una imagen / un objeto de la imagen se puede escuchar la pronunciación de la palabra que ya aparece escrita, con lo cual lo visual se completa con lo auditivo, combinación de los sentidos que favorece la memorización del vocablo. Esta interacción del estudiante con la imagen y con el sonido se puede repetir cuantas veces sea necesario para una buena recepción de lo impartido por el profesor, lo que en clase no es posible, dada la limitación del tiempo que se dedica a un tema. Por lo tanto, imaginamos este tipo de actividades como un complemento a lo estudiado en una clase presencial. Como se puede ver, el uso de los instrumentos digitales permite utilizar imágenes reales de los objetos, hecho que facilita el aprendizaje. Pero, siempre hay que tener en cuenta los derechos de autor (se pueden utilizar imágenes propias, imágenes creadas por la inteligencia artificial, imágenes libres de derechos de autor, mencionando las fuentes de las mismas). El docente puede crear sus propios materiales, adaptados a las necesidades de sus alumnos, tanto cognitivas, como también afectivas. Al mismo tiempo, tiene la posibilidad de utilizar aplicaciones digitales capaces de buscar una diversidad de recursos, como *Wakelet*³ que recopila recursos multimedia, imágenes, videos, páginas *web*, que se pueden organizar temáticamente para un uso interactivo. Vamos a ejemplificar con una muestra extraída del sitio *Paginasextosecundaria*, recuperado de: <https://sites.google.com/view/paginasextosecundaria/2021-2022>:

³ ****. (actualización 2024). *Wakelet*. Recuperado de: <https://wakelet.com/>, el 13.07.2024.

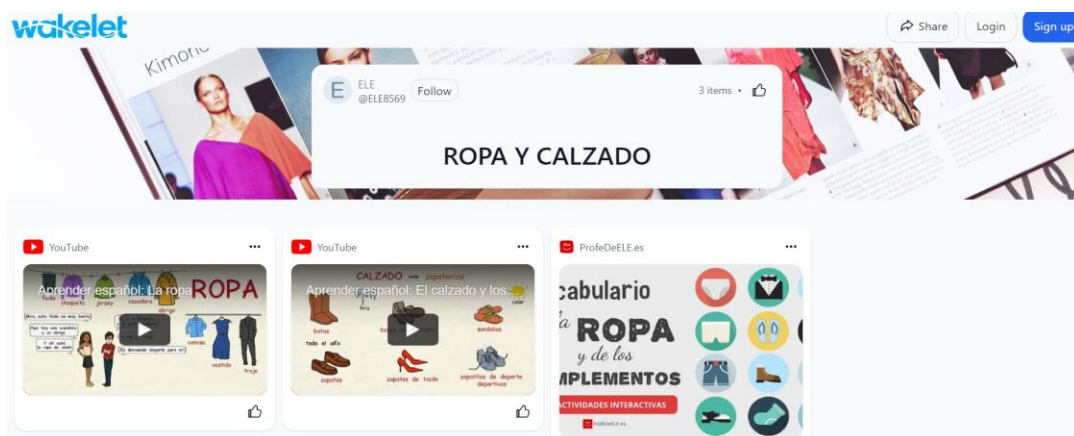


Imagen 2. Ropa y calzado – recopilación de actividades creada mediante Wakelet

Fuente: <https://wakelet.com/wake/zZ2xZM4j0jB5Vm8o0TIri>, el 13.07.2024

Se trata de un ejercicio que complementa el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje clásico, que se realiza fuera del aula, lo que elimina los posibles impedimentos de realizar las actividades debido a la falta de infraestructura tecnológica apropiada en las escuelas o centros educativos, pero también las diferencias entre los alumnos porque cada uno puede trabajar a su ritmo. Para el profesor requiere una selección muy atenta del material y un seguimiento de la utilidad y del aprovechamiento del uso del material digital proporcionado.

La recopilación de las tres actividades fue creada mediante *Wakelet*, que es una plataforma en línea que permite a los usuarios guardar, organizar y compartir contenido digital en colecciones llamadas "*Wakelets*". Para el acceso, los usuarios deben registrarse mediante el correo electrónico o cuentas de *Google*, *Microsoft* o redes sociales. Los usuarios pueden recopilar enlaces, videos, imágenes, notas, documentos (proyecto escolar, lista de lecturas) y otros tipos de contenido, de diversas fuentes, como sitios *web*, videos de *YouTube*, publicaciones de redes sociales, imágenes, archivos PDF o notas personales, y organizarlos y/o reorganizarlos en colecciones temáticas que se pueden personalizar (utilizar cierta portada, introducir descripciones o notas o etiquetas para facilitar la búsqueda) y visualizar en diferentes estilos. Un aspecto positivo es que estas colecciones pueden ser colaborativas, es decir, varios usuarios pueden contribuir a una misma colección, lo cual es muy útil para proyectos de grupo o trabajo en equipo, y luego compartirlas de diferentes modos: utilizando enlaces directos o códigos QR. De esta forma, las colecciones pueden ser públicas o mantenerse privadas o ser compartidas solo con personas específicas.

Por lo tanto, en este apartado temático tenemos dos videos de *YouTube* y una actividad interactiva relacionada con el vocabulario de la ropa y de los

complementos. El primer video es una conversación de nivel A1 entre una mujer y un hombre que van de compras. Los subtítulos facilitan la comprensión, sobre todo para los principiantes. En cuanto al número de actividades proporcionadas, lo consideramos suficiente para no agobiar al estudiante y para evitar la sobrecarga de informaciones, lo que llevaría a una falta de concentración y de retención de la información.

Al exponer al alumnado a una variedad de acentos (de España, de América Latina), a diversos ritmos, en conformidad con su nivel de adquisición de la lengua, utilizando videos de *YouTube*, por ejemplo, se alcanza más fácilmente el objetivo de comprender el habla de un nativo. Sin estos recursos sería difícil mejorar esta destreza.

Otra herramienta digital utilizada para la construcción del sitio *web* es *Genially*⁴. Se trata de una plataforma en línea que, a base de una cuenta de usuario, permite la creación de presentaciones multimedia, interactivas (se pueden añadir efectos visuales y animaciones) de manera sencilla. Es una alternativa más atractiva y dinámica para las diapositivas tradicionales, que permite la colaboración en tiempo real en el caso de un trabajo en grupo y se puede compartir fácilmente a través de un enlace o insertarlo en un sitio, como es nuestro caso.



Imagen 3. ¡Cómo mola el primer día! – Índice de las actividades creadas mediante Genially

Fuente: <https://view.genially.com/6192c262deff4a0dd4bee5d7>, el 13.07.2024

Con la ayuda de *Genially* hemos diseñado una unidad didáctica que pone en práctica varias destrezas puesto que comprende diferentes actividades a partir de un texto-pretexto del manual *Club Prisma A2* (Bueso et al., 2017, p. 8). Los ejercicios propuestos son: de doble elección, verdadero o falso, de vocabulario, de comprensión de lectura, de expresión oral, de discriminación: presente de

⁴ ****. (actualización 2024). *Genially*. Recuperado de: <https://genially.com/>, el 10.07.2024.

indicativo regular e irregular, de expresión escrita (que, aparte de poner en práctica los elementos de construcción de la lengua, vocabulario y gramática, se centra en los estados de ánimo, los sentimientos, los valores, las creencias de los estudiantes) y una galería foto que introduce vocabulario pertinente para el tema y es un pretexto para la recontextualización y el reforzamiento de lo estudiado. Utilizando esta variante digital, para completar el trabajo con el manual de la clase, se hace el curso más atractivo, más interesante, más dinámico, lo que motiva a los estudiantes y mantiene su atención despierta. Su implicación hace el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje más eficiente.

Con *EducaPlay*⁵ hemos creado una actividad lúdica que consiste en relacionar algunas expresiones con las imágenes correspondientes a su significado.

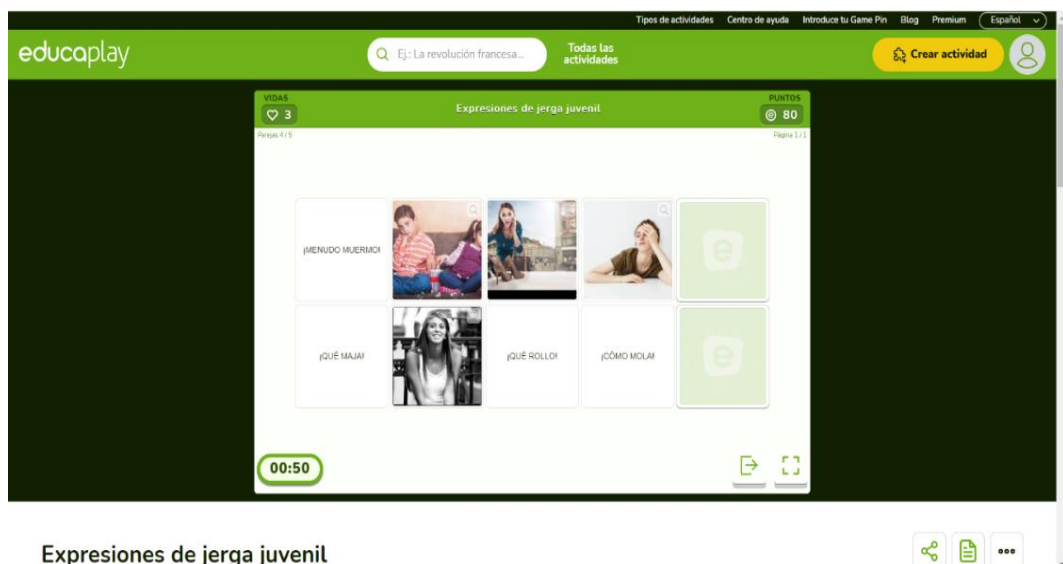


Imagen 4. Ejercicio de vocabulario creado mediante EducaPlay

Fuente: https://es.educaplay.com/recursos-educativos/10904337-expresiones_de_jerga_juvenil.html, el 13.07.2024

Para la realización de esta actividad, cada estudiante debe tener una cuenta donde se registra el número de intentos, el tiempo necesario para la resolución del ejercicio, y al final el profesor puede obtener un informe de todos los participantes, lo que facilita su trabajo.

Entre las ventajas de utilizar una herramienta digital en este caso mencionamos: crear una atmósfera agradable en clase, propicia para el aprendizaje, aumentar la motivación y la implicación de los estudiantes. Hasta se puede realizar una competición entre ellos, lo que dinamiza todavía más la clase.

⁵ ****. (actualización 2024). *EducaPlay*. Recuperado de: <https://www.educaplay.com/>, el 10.07.2024.

*Quizizz*⁶ se ha convertido en una herramienta esencial para la evaluación formativa, permitiéndonos sustituir evaluaciones escritas y detectar áreas de mejora en el aprendizaje del alumnado. Los estudiantes completan las actividades tanto en clase como en casa, y los informes detallados de la aplicación nos ayudan a medir su progreso individual y colectivo.

La flexibilidad de *Quizizz* permite que las evaluaciones sean más relajadas, mostrando respuestas y revisiones al final del test. Valoramos especialmente la posibilidad de que los estudiantes aprendan de sus errores, con opciones para repetir las pruebas y mejorar sus calificaciones. Además, los alumnos más avanzados pueden crear sus propios cuestionarios.

Recomendamos *Quizizz* a todos los profesores por su versatilidad y facilidad de uso. Aunque no debe ser la única herramienta de evaluación, es muy útil en combinación con otras. Es ideal para realizar evaluaciones en grupo, individuales o como tarea en casa, siempre que los estudiantes tengan acceso a un dispositivo con conexión a internet.

Usando esta herramienta, hemos propuesto un ejercicio de gramática, de elección múltiple de formas verbales en indicativo presente, correctas o incorrectas, adecuadas o no para un contexto dado.

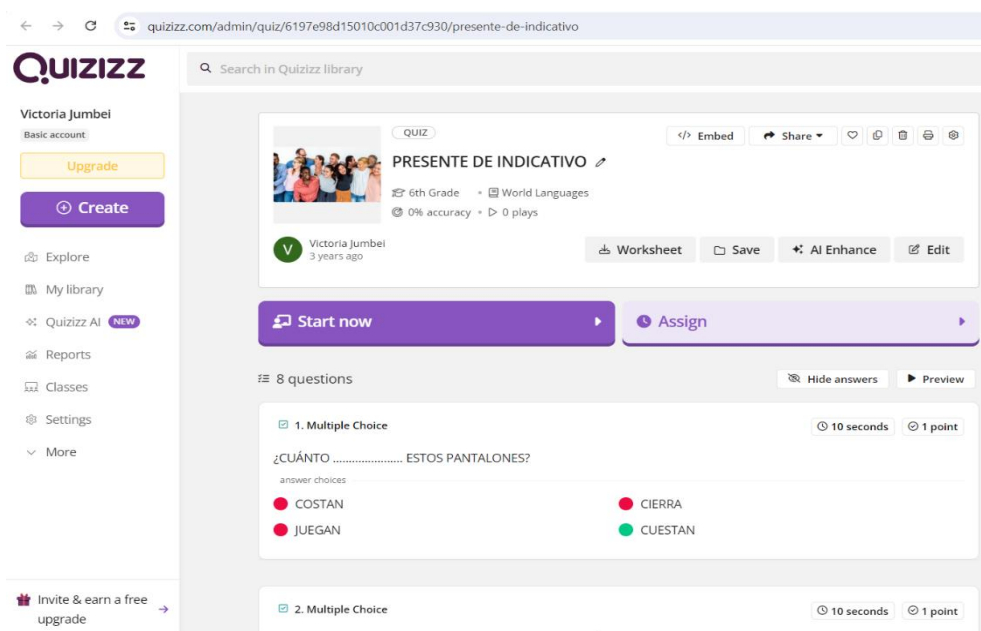


Imagen 5. Cuestionario relacionado con el presente de indicativo creado mediante Quizizz

Fuente: <https://quizizz.com/admin/quiz/6197e98d15010c001d37c930/presente-de-indicativo>, el 13.07.2024

⁶ ****. (actualización 2024). *Quizizz*. Recuperado de: <https://quizizz.com>, el 10.07.2024.

En otra página, creada mediante *Vocaroo*⁷, presentamos un ejercicio de comprensión auditiva, donde los alumnos marcan frases como verdaderas o falsas.



Imagen 6. Cuestionario relacionado con el saludo en España creado mediante Vocaroo

Fuente: <https://sites.google.com/view/paginasextosecundaria/2021-2022/el-saludo-en-espa%C3%B1a>, el 13.07.2024

Además, se sugieren tareas para identificar ideas clave y organizar un *podcast* divertido que refuerce conocimientos sobre la cultura española y rumana. Estas actividades se complementan con una rúbrica de coevaluación, que guía a los estudiantes y los involucra en la evaluación de su trabajo final. *Vocaroo* destaca como una excelente herramienta para compartir redacciones y mejorar la expresión escrita. El alumnado está cada vez más integrado en el uso de tecnologías educativas, y *Vocaroo* es una herramienta en línea que apoya el desarrollo de competencias lingüísticas en todos los niveles. Facilita metodologías activas y cooperativas, fomenta la creatividad y la competencia digital y ayuda en la expresión de opiniones y sentimientos de manera clara y ordenada. *Vocaroo* también es útil para la inclusión educativa, especialmente para estudiantes con dificultades de comprensión lectora.

Vocaroo se utiliza en clase para diversas actividades, como entrevistas y programas de radio, que motivan al alumnado. Asimismo, permite al profesorado ofrecer retroalimentación continua y seguir la evolución de los estudiantes a lo largo del tiempo. Esta herramienta es ideal para que los alumnos editen sus primeros *podcasts*, desarrollando habilidades de comunicación y mejorando la coherencia en la expresión oral.

⁷ ****. (actualización 2024). *Vocaroo*. Recuperado de: <https://vocaroo.com/>, el 10.07.2024.

En resumen, *Vocaroo* es una herramienta versátil que promueve una metodología activa y cooperativa, facilitando la creación y evaluación de tareas competenciales. Su simplicidad y eficacia la hacen ideal para introducir a los estudiantes en la tecnología y mejorar la participación en situaciones de comunicación. Es un recurso innovador que se adapta a las necesidades cambiantes del entorno educativo.

La actividad “Viaje a Santander” utiliza *Flipgrid*⁸ para que los estudiantes valoren lugares y lo argumenten, fomentando el debate a través de videos. *Flipgrid* es una herramienta diseñada para dar voz a todos los estudiantes, permitiéndoles expresarse en un entorno seguro que promueve el aprendizaje social. Los alumnos comparten sus opiniones y responden a sus compañeros mediante breves videos en un grupo cerrado, lo que involucra a todos, incluso a los más tímidos.

A pesar de la resistencia inicial a grabarse en video, los estudiantes aceptaron bien *Flipgrid* después de familiarizarse con su uso, especialmente al saber que los videos se almacenan de forma privada. La herramienta es intuitiva y su diseño motiva a los usuarios a grabar, editar y publicar videos. Además, permite la interacción entre alumnos y ofrece opciones de retroalimentación, ya sea básica o personalizada.

Flipgrid es útil para desarrollar la competencia lingüística en diversas asignaturas, desde lengua y literatura hasta áreas no lingüísticas como geografía e historia. Se puede adaptar a diferentes niveles educativos, desde secundaria hasta bachillerato, y permite realizar descripciones, presentaciones de obras, y debates asíncronos.

En nuestra práctica, utilizamos *Flipgrid* al final de la unidad para consolidar los conocimientos adquiridos. Esta herramienta es versátil y eficaz en diversas metodologías educativas, especialmente en el desarrollo de habilidades comunicativas en lenguas extranjeras. Además, *Flipgrid* fomenta el pensamiento crítico y permite a los estudiantes compartir diferentes perspectivas en los debates.

Por su flexibilidad, *Flipgrid* puede integrarse en cualquier materia o nivel académico, ayudando a los estudiantes a ganar confianza en su expresión oral y brindándoles una plataforma para expresar sus opiniones. La herramienta promueve un aprendizaje social activo, donde los estudiantes son protagonistas de su propio proceso educativo.

En otra actividad diseñada utilizando la herramienta *Edpuzzle*⁹, los alumnos completan tareas durante la presentación de la ciudad de Toledo. *Edpuzzle* permite

⁸ ****. (actualización 2024). *Flipgrid*. Recuperado de: <https://info.flip.com>, el 10.07.2024.

⁹ ****. (actualización 2024). *Edpuzzle*. Recuperado de: <https://edpuzzle.com/>, el 10.07.2024.

integrar notas de audio y preguntas en los videos, lo que facilita evaluar la comprensión de los estudiantes. Además, la aplicación ofrece un registro detallado del progreso de los alumnos, como quiénes han visto el video, el tiempo dedicado, la precisión en las respuestas y si necesitaron volver a ver el video.

Los estudiantes descargan la aplicación en sus dispositivos móviles y acceden a las tareas mediante un código. *Edpuzzle* es una herramienta en línea que permite editar videos, ya sean propios o de la *web*, para adaptarlos a las necesidades educativas. Los docentes pueden cortar videos, añadir voz en *off*, e insertar preguntas para verificar la comprensión. Una vez editado el video, se asigna a los estudiantes, estableciendo fechas de inicio y fin para la tarea.

Edpuzzle es especialmente útil en la enseñanza de lenguas, ya que facilita la comprensión oral y escrita y ayuda a superar dificultades de aprendizaje, como la falta de atención. La aplicación también notifica al alumnado sobre nuevas tareas o plazos cercanos, y elimina problemas comunes al proyectar videos en clase, como la falta de sonido o tiempo para leer preguntas.

Además, *Edpuzzle* fomenta el trabajo cooperativo y reduce el uso de papel en el aula. Su implementación requiere una planificación previa que tenga en cuenta el nivel educativo y los conocimientos previos del alumnado. La herramienta es fácil de usar, lo que la convierte en un recurso valioso para modernizar las metodologías de enseñanza, apoyando la integración de las TIC y el *m-learning* en el aula.

La última actividad de nuestro sitio *web* se realizó en *Book Creator*¹⁰ y se centró en desarrollar la competencia de expresión escrita. Los estudiantes, en grupos de cuatro, expresaron sus opiniones sobre ver una película en el cine versus en casa. Usaron un libro compartido en la plataforma, añadiendo texto, imágenes, grabaciones y dibujos. Cada grupo, guiado por un compañero más capacitado, diseñó su propia página, siguiendo un formato predefinido. El docente pudo monitorear el avance, y al finalizar, los estudiantes tuvieron la posibilidad de ver su trabajo junto al de sus compañeros.

Book Creator destaca por su facilidad para crear libros digitales interactivos, permitiendo la colaboración en tiempo real, la integración de voz y video, y diversas opciones de personalización. Esta herramienta promueve el aprendizaje activo, la creatividad y el trabajo en equipo, adaptándose a los diferentes ritmos y estilos de aprendizaje de los estudiantes. Aunque se identificaron errores ortográficos y de sintaxis, todos los estudiantes participaron activamente, lo que fue considerado el logro más importante.

¹⁰ ****. (actualización 2024). *Book Creator*. Recuperado de: <https://bookcreator.com/>, el 10.07.2024.

Según la encuesta realizada con los estudiantes que recorrieron las actividades propuestas en el sitio *web*, resulta un alto grado de satisfacción, dado que todos los alumnos contestan que consideran entretenido usar herramientas digitales en clase de ELE. De acuerdo con la retroalimentación proporcionada por el alumnado, el uso de herramientas digitales para interactuar y practicar la lengua meta tiene un impacto positivo en su proceso de aprendizaje. No solo contribuye al desarrollo de sus competencias lingüísticas, sino que también les permite mejorar sus habilidades informáticas. Esta combinación de beneficios demuestra cómo la integración de la tecnología en el aula puede enriquecer la experiencia educativa de manera integral.

Un claro ejemplo de este impacto positivo se refleja en la respuesta a la pregunta sobre si es entretenido utilizar herramientas digitales durante las clases de español. Los resultados muestran un grado de satisfacción máximo entre los participantes, ya que todos los estudiantes respondieron afirmativamente. Esto evidencia que el uso de tecnología no solo es percibido como útil para el aprendizaje, sino también como una herramienta que incrementa la motivación y el disfrute de las clases.

En cuanto al uso de herramientas digitales en el proceso de aprendizaje del español, los estudiantes tuvieron la oportunidad de expresarse libremente sobre si este método les facilitaba o mejoraba su aprendizaje. Cabe destacar que, dada la edad de los participantes (12-13 años), resulta complicado para muchos justificar de manera elaborada sus decisiones, lo que hizo necesario reformular algunas de sus respuestas. Los resultados de la encuesta muestran que un 63,3% de los estudiantes (19 alumnos) considera que el uso de herramientas digitales les ayuda a aprender español de forma más fácil y efectiva, principalmente porque están acostumbrados a la tecnología, lo que les permite practicar sus habilidades lingüísticas mientras se divierten. Otro grupo significativo, que representa el 30% de los encuestados (9 alumnos), manifiesta que el uso de estas herramientas no solo les ayuda en el aprendizaje del español, sino también en el desarrollo de habilidades tecnológicas. Sin embargo, un porcentaje reducido (6,7%, es decir, 2 alumnos) no percibe que el uso de la tecnología facilite su aprendizaje, ya que no dominan bien las herramientas digitales y, por lo tanto, encuentran más difícil adquirir conocimientos mediante este método.

En el mismo sondeo se exploró también cuáles de las herramientas digitales empleadas en clase les habían resultado más interesantes a los alumnos. En esta pregunta, los estudiantes podían seleccionar varias alternativas. Las respuestas revelaron una amplia diversidad de preferencias: el 95% de los estudiantes señaló

"Presente irregular" usando *Quizizz* como la herramienta más atractiva, seguida por "Jerga juvenil" en *Educaplay* con un 85%, "El saludo en España" a través de *Vocaroo* con un 83%, y "Primer día de cole" en *Genially* con un 76%, al igual que "Toledo" en *Edpuzzle* (76%). Otras actividades destacadas fueron "Ropa y calzado" con *Wakelet* (72%), "Pantalla grande o pantalla pequeña" usando *Book Creator* (68%), "De dónde venimos y adónde vamos" (59%), y "Viaje a Santander" en *Flipgrid* (47%).

En relación con el uso de estas herramientas, también se preguntó al alumnado si había alguna en particular que el docente debería emplear con mayor frecuencia. Veinticinco estudiantes indicaron que preferirían que se utilizara *Quizizz*, o alguna aplicación de evaluación similar, con más regularidad en los exámenes. No obstante, señalaron que la actividad más desafiante fue "Viaje a Santander", debido a las dificultades encontradas tanto en el uso de *Flipgrid* como en la expresión escrita.

Por último, se investigó la frecuencia con la que los estudiantes preferirían utilizar herramientas digitales en las clases de español como lengua extranjera (ELE). Estas clases, de carácter intensivo, se imparten durante cuatro horas semanales. Los resultados indicaron que todos los estudiantes están a favor de emplear aplicaciones digitales ya sea en cada clase (70%) o al menos una vez por semana (30%).

En conjunto, la retroalimentación obtenida revela datos valiosos sobre el contexto de enseñanza-aprendizaje y la motivación del alumnado. Las tecnologías de la información y de la comunicación (TIC) han facilitado la relación entre el proceso de enseñanza y el aprendizaje y han incrementado significativamente la motivación de los estudiantes, haciéndolos más participativos y comprometidos en su formación lingüística. La incorporación de recursos digitales en la enseñanza de lenguas no solo facilita la adquisición de la lengua meta, sino que también promueve el desarrollo de competencias tecnológicas, haciendo el proceso más dinámico, interactivo y atractivo para los estudiantes.

Para concluir, señalamos que este trabajo no pretende ser una presentación exhaustiva de las herramientas digitales que se pueden utilizar en clase de ELE, lo que sería imposible dada la multitud de plataformas y aplicaciones existentes actualmente en el mercado, sino una muestra del uso de estas para desarrollar todas las competencias lingüísticas (comprensión oral y escrita, expresión oral y escrita, interacción) y del impacto positivo que tienen, además de hacer las clases más atractivas y más dinámicas y de dar una perspectiva nueva, actual, al proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

CONCLUSIÓN

En conclusión, aunque la educación tradicional presenta resistencia frente al uso de las nuevas tecnologías, consideramos que el uso de las herramientas digitales en clase de lengua tiene un impacto positivo en el desarrollo de las competencias lingüísticas y digitales del alumnado, así como en el incremento de la motivación, de la creatividad y de la autonomía en el aprendizaje, por ende, de la comunicación, siempre que exista un equilibrio en su uso, aún más si los estudiantes disponen de herramientas digitales para practicar lo estudiado fuera del aula, en autonomía. Además, la multitud de las herramientas digitales existentes hoy en día, de forma gratuita o pagada, permite la personalización del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, convirtiéndose en una opción accesible, útil, actual, popular, tanto para el uso personal como educativo.

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Mediating Meaning through Dynamic Rapport Management and Reflection in Collaborative Academic Instruction

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to offer an insight into the use and benefits of employing rapport management strategies and reflective practices in the academic instruction as part of the university curriculum of postgraduate Intercultural Communication programs within the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Cluj, Romania. Rapport management is crucial in academia as it fosters an inclusive environment that enables the free exchange of information, enhancement of advanced communicative competences as well as provision of both self-awareness and awareness of other interactants. Moreover, *dynamic rapport management* mediates reflection that consequently supports higher order thinking skills and an overall *image* acknowledgement that feeds a complex student-instructor interaction. Drawing on Spencer-Oatey’s TRIPS Framework (2024), the study provides a contextualised analysis of this dynamics within an academic setting. The pragmatic choices discourse participants make have a huge bearing on the quality of their oral and written outputs that are both improved and emotionally sustained through the contextualised use of rapport creation strategies. We also aim to bring into discussion research developments that have influenced the role *reflection* plays in the *mediation* and interpretation of *meaning* in academic interaction that includes careful consideration of *face needs* pertaining to instructors and students alike. Face-awareness, rapport management considerations as well as empowered reflection are essential in supporting the negotiation of both content and form. The study shares an observation-based slice of a pedagogical framework that suggests focus on both rapport management and consistent reflection to foster meaning. The data was analysed in order to assess students’ perceptions with reference to rapport management and reflection related manifestations and associated benefits in academic instruction intermediated by English as a foreign language. We argue that the aforementioned elements may be integrated into a methodological and pedagogical framework of academic instruction where the foreign language (English) becomes *the glue* that politely mediates *meaning* within a collaborative class culture.

Keywords: *meaning, rapport management, reflection, collaborative interaction, intercultural communication*

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INTRODUCTION

Within the realm of academic instruction and, more specifically, instruction that unfolds through the fluid medium of a foreign language, there is no greater responsibility than the one of imparting *meaning* beyond knowledge acquisition and skills development. “The role of educators in bolstering meaning may be a vital one” (Steger et al., 2021). Moreover, attaining meaning in education is a challenging endeavor on the one hand because meaning is constantly negotiated amongst stakeholders, and, on the other hand, because meaning is contextualised and tailored onto the specific intricacies of the human mind and corresponding human needs. *Meaning* has been the subject of scrutiny in various research domains for decades, starting with Victor Frankl (1963) who famously stated that looking for meaning may very well be the “most human drive” humankind displays. The philosopher also connected meaning to purpose, giving rise to an extraordinarily rich body of research that has been ensuing on the subject ever since. In recent years, meaning has become intrinsically connected with wellbeing, mindfulness, and a sense of inner representation that the 21st century individuals are increasingly finding challenging to achieve.

What exactly does meaning entail at higher education level? What are the possible elements that shape up one’s own sense of meaning? Irrespective of the domain researchers belong to, upon attempting to offer answers to these questions, three dimensions seem to remain constant: *coherence* (a cognitive component articulated by one’s experience of life, of own self, of being able to draw one’s own conclusions about the world), *purpose* (a motivation-based element that is associated with the strive to be consistent in achieving goals), and *significance* (an element that adds an overall assessment-ridden value to the mix as it refers to one’s need to be relevant, to feel valid and validated (Steger et al., 2021, p.558).

The present study contends that *meaning* in an academic instruction is mediated through *dynamic rapport management* and *consistent reflection* as part of a higher-education context that is specific and complex: a course in Intercultural Business Communication conducted in a foreign language (i.e. Business English). The salient goals are to achieve communicative objectives that enable students to comprehend the course-related content from an interactional perspective that is constructed through dynamic rapport and reflective practices. The presented slice of a pedagogical framework we propose, creates opportunities for autonomy, conscious learner awareness, and the development of a sense of belonging to a collaborative and empathetic class culture. The enhancement of students’ growth mindset in academic instruction is essential. Although the majority of students are

aware of what academic content they have to cover and process, there is undeniably less awareness as to what particular skills and strategies are needed in order to be able to maximise their learning. The need to develop specific skills over time is associated with higher order thinking competences and students' willingness to recognize that what they learn is important and relevant beyond the classroom walls. Instructors have the difficult responsibility of enabling students to think about their learning process, to explain and detail the benefits of using metacognitive strategies in one's academic life as this improves both the quality of the process as well as its outcomes. A very useful step is to explicitly present information to students about their individual approaches to learning, about their mindsets that are continually changing and evolving especially when reinforced and supported by reflective practices. Students' self-regulation strategies are as important as their academic study due to the fact that they lead to autonomy that is more difficult to achieve when the medium of instruction is a foreign language. Meaning at university level is also achieved when students engage with the content and with the instructor as they find the effort to be personally beneficial. Therefore, offering explanations as to why the content matters becomes essential. Additionally, students who are aware that there is a meaningful, positive rapport with the instructor are more engaged in classes and experience "more positive learner affect" that is directly dependent on rapport (Flanigan et al., 2021).

Moreover, the reality of constantly changing classroom environments offers updated challenges that technological advancement pertaining to hybrid education tries to successfully support to a certain extent. Generational shifts occur and meaning in academia is no longer dependent exclusively on the transfer of information or expertise. Information is readily available, non-formal education plays an important role, the workplace is intertwined with classroom environments where managing rapport is evermore essential. In this sea of palpable transformation, reflection can act as a "gyroscope" (Brookfield, 2017, p.81) enabling educators to remain balanced and grounded.

To serve the purpose of the present study, we have attached an interactional value to the construct of meaning situating it at the confluence of rapport management and reflection in order to provide a slice of a pedagogical framework that may support both students and instructors. This study aims to explore the impact of rapport management and reflection on students' perception of achieving higher comprehension of course concepts and meaning with an illustrative focus on two types of applications completed as part of an Intercultural Business Communication module at university level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

THE CONSTRUCTS OF RAPPORT AND RAPPORT MANAGEMENT

As early as 1990, the concept of rapport was primarily researched and understood as being inherently connected to a human being's state of mind as individuals were taking part in discussions as "separate entities" with individual characteristics that were not analysed as part of a whole (Altman, 1990). The conceptualisation of rapport slowly shifts away from this initial perspective as rapport is gradually analysed from a twofold rather than individualistic perspective, the concept consequently becoming a two-way interaction and negotiation that discourse participants create. This is a significant development within the field of rapport research: rapport is articulated and built on through discourse and interaction being in need of maintenance and enhancement (DePaulo & Bell, 1990; Drolet & Morris, 2000; Planken, 2005; Spencer-Oatey, 2002; Spencer-Oatey, 2008).

Rapport is perceived as being "a dynamic state" (Abbe & Brandon, 2013, p. 238) and is fluid in that it can be considered separately from a general relationship two human beings share. Being "in sync" may alternate with being "out of sync" in a particular context, hence rapport is deemed positive/negative in accordance with particular communicative events and not general aspects in a relationship. A definition of the construct of rapport that we favour as it reflects the rationale behind the paper (meaningful academic instruction) is provided by Kelly et al. and brings into focus once more "the give and take, the interactional nature of rapport", which sets rapport "apart from the other domains" (Kelly et al., 2013, p. 169).

Interpersonal relationship research cannot exist outside the comprehensive concept of rapport as it is a core construct that primarily explains and articulates how individuals relate to each other for a shared communicative purpose (Sinha, Zhao & Cassell, 2015). Whether in academia or medicine, computer science or business, rapport is the foundation of forging "collaborative trusting interpersonal relationships" (Cassell & Bickmore, 2003, p. 89) that is, feels and transpires as different from the word *relationship* alone. One iconic description of the construct as "the relative harmony and smoothness of relations between people" (Spencer-Oatey, 2005, p. 96) points to the relative difficulty to define the construct as it often has an elusive idiosyncratic quality to it, a particular "chemistry" occurring or not between people without additional justifications (Svennevig, 1999). Moreover, as

the construct hints at “smooth, positive interpersonal interaction” (Abbe & Brandon, 2014, pp. 207-208), researchers note that the elements that form rapport are nevertheless more difficult to pinpoint and describe. Linguists also refer to the subjective side rapport has as it speaks of particular choices that participants use and that ultimately form their overall communication style (Capella, 1990). The difficulty in grasping and operationalising the concept of rapport has been mirrored in a body of research that strives to turn a relatively non gaugeable concept into one that presents certain elements that lend themselves to being categorised, quantified and assessed (DePaulo & Bell, 1990; Drolet & Morris, 2000, p. 28).

The “positivity” of the interaction seems to be an element that shapes rapport, Tickle-Degnen and Rosenthal (1990) associating certain behavioural features with the construct such as a certain degree of active participation and attentiveness as well as the overall coherence and positivity that participants contribute to the interaction as they work towards a resolution of communicative acts. Turn-taking assumed in an active way is also mentioned by Capella who identifies a mutuality, certain “patterns of responsiveness in interaction” (Capella, 1990, p. 303), one needing to act and react in accordance with participants’ stakes. Moreover, accommodation and convergence of discourse do show that an interlocutor has made an effort to adapt, to alter or to fine-tune communication on various linguistic levels such as the nonverbal one (mirroring, eye contact, facial cues), at a prosodic level (attempting to change speech rate in order to become more ‘in sync’ or even at content level as interlocutors do mitigate use of jargon according to each other’s benefit.

Despite the fact that rapport definitions within the field do not necessarily agree on what specifically contributes to good rapport, in this study we consider that rapport is a rather comprehensive construct that has an intangible value attached to it as it reveals an ultimately meaningful *relationship* one establishes with another individual. Consequently, rapport is subject to change and enhancement, it also requires the willingness to synchronise linguistic and non-linguistic behaviours with another individual as well as an overall awareness that may lead to quality interactions. In this paper, we use the phrase *dynamic rapport management* for the conscious process of initiating, maintaining, updating and improving one’s two-way interactional awareness and communication style to acknowledge and tap into common communicative interests. Psychology related studies include rapport management and its manifestations at linguistic methodology level (Cassell et al., 2007); similarly, computational linguistics researchers have focussed on how rapport and artificial intelligence may encourage users to engage with apps and

computer programs that simulate human rapport (Sinha, Zhao & Cassell, 2015; Zhao et al., 2016; Seo et al., 2017). Additionally, professional communication and intercultural communication researchers have given rapport management various interpretations locating it at the core of communication acts while interpersonal pragmatics studies have been dealing with various elements constituting rapport that influence the way we relate to each other, the type of impact rapport has on *face* and face management, analysing context as the backdrop against which communicative stakes are negotiated towards a resolution. As “relationships are reflected in the language choices” people make (Locher & Graham, 2010, p. 2), interpersonal pragmatics studies have focussed on how communication styles and word choice may alter relationships for the better or for the worse. Politeness has often been connected to rapport especially from a sociological perspective that perceives individuals as participants projecting needs, rights and entitlements. In 2002, Helen Spencer-Oatey famously formulated and developed a Framework that purposefully aimed at detailing rapport management through the linguistic *politeness* lens, focusing on how linguistic and pragmatic politeness constructs work within the broader scope of the framework. Since 2002, Helen Spencer Oatey’s research work and contextualised analyses of rapport management manifestation in the workplace has evolved significantly, the researcher developing frameworks that are genuine toolkits in dealing with relationship related challenges and dilemmas. In what concerns the field of teaching and learning (whether face-to-face or in technologically enhanced environments), the study of rapport and rapport management invariably takes on an interdisciplinary approach as researchers in the field focus on linguistic, psychological, behavioural, methodological and cultural aspects. Rapport is an essential element in encouraging the development of critical thinking skills leading to higher quality interaction-based fluency-a major pedagogical advantage (Ädel, 2011; Olsen & Finkelstein, 2017). The transactional value of rapport is obvious in research undertaken within the intercultural and cross-cultural business fields as these applications offer insights on how best to deal with cultural clashes that may impede on communication in professional settings. There is extensive rapport management research that delves into the intricate field of economics, more specifically the marketing and customer communications field as rapport influences on the one hand the teamwork that is often essential in project based tasks and, on the other hand, the shortcuts to dealing with customers in customer service support contexts (Gremier & Gwinner, 2000).

According to Spencer-Oatey (2005, p. 96), there are four main types of rapport orientation that enable a more thorough comprehension of this complex construct:

(1) rapport enhancement to encourage and strengthen harmonious relations, (2) rapport maintenance to safeguard them, (3) rapport neglect that shows a certain lack of concern or interest in the relationship quality, and (4) rapport challenge or impairment. While engaging in a meaning loaded relationship, interactants become aware of and pay attention to the above-listed interactional choices consequently resorting to the use of certain rapport-related strategies. These various orientations towards rapport “change dynamically during the course of an interaction or series of interactions” (Spencer-Oatey, 2000, pp. 29-30; Haugh & Carbaugh, 2015). Discourse participants tend to appreciate rapport management taking into account three important factors: (1) to what extent their own behavioural expectations correspond to the actions of the other participants, (2) the particular face sensitivities of the interactants, and (3) the interactional wants and goals revealed in interaction (whether task related or interpersonal (Spencer-Oatey, 2005, p. 96). The way an individual assesses the quality of the rapport is therefore inadvertently connected to the achievement of the interactional goals. Additionally, other factors are at play, contributing to rapport upgrade or its downgrade. One important aspect to consider lies at the foundation of pragmatic politeness, that is the concept of *face* and *face* wants/needs and to what extent these are upheld in interaction.

TRIPS RAPPORT MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (Helen Spencer-Oatey & Domna Lazidou, 2024)

The TRIPS Toolkit was designed by the authors as a helpful guide in an otherwise perilous intercultural context where business stakeholders need to face and deal with a variety of challenges that are always contextually bound and hence require certain strategies to ensure success and valid accomplishment of set goals. The Toolkit is aimed at employees and employers alike whether in a position of leadership or not, having applications onto genuine intercultural relationships that are riddled with peril. Reading the given context, understanding its idiosyncratic features as well as inviting towards a thorough comprehension of theoretical concepts and practical strategies, the TRIPS toolkit lends itself to good use in the academic instruction that includes Intercultural Business Communication modules. We acknowledge the hands-on usefulness of the TRIPS Framework and include it in the present paper as part of our methodology focussing on critical incidents that reiterate the interconnectedness between rapport management and informed, structured reflection as the main driver towards meaning filled content and interaction between students and instructor via a foreign language.

In what follows, we will proceed to describe briefly the elements included in the TRIPS model by insisting on how these elements enable students and instructors to fulfil tasks that lead to the development of both intercultural competence and rapport management skills. There is no awareness without reflection, consequently reflection is the glue that connects pre-task and post-tasks gains. We will also show how the two applications that we have chosen to illustrate in the Method section of the paper foster rapport management through consciously assigning students roles and thus empowering them to critically think about the intercultural incident/context described.

The TRIPS Rapport Management Framework includes five elements: triggers, reactions, interactions, people, and settings, the acronym providing –as a whole- a tool for enabling users to not only engage in effective relationships in the working environment but also to maintain them by evaluating occurrences between participants in a valid, unbiased and reflective way. We suggest that the TRIPS Framework presents benefits for academic instruction that mirrors the workplace realities students will ultimately perform in. In our applications for the present study, we draw on the elements included in the framework, namely triggers, reactions and interactions as these aspects have been the main focus in the set assignments inviting critical analysis and intentional reflection. In this section of the paper, we would like to provide more explanations about each of the components. When addressed individually they render themselves as salient in supporting rapport that is based on mutual respect of interactants' communicative rights and needs, each of the components encouraging communicative autonomy, higher ranking thinking skills and informed reflection. According to Spencer-Oatey and Lazidou (2024), evaluation made under Triggers would provide individuals with a deeper understanding as to what rapport is for the contextualised communicative instance, what aspects might jeopardise and/or improve it. The Reactions element is the umbrella reference to emotions comprehension, to evaluating the others' and one's own thinking patterns and overall judgements and behavioural reactions. Self-regulation of emotional responses in communicative activities is hard to achieve as it involves knowledge of intercultural communication theoretical concepts as well as recognising difference in emotional reactions others have, consequently transforming our and their reactions into cognitive reactions that are run by valid and sensible evaluation. The third element- Interactions- invites towards the acknowledgment of how communication in general and communicative events can cause rapport reactions. The fourth element of the TRIPS acronym is People as main actors and stakeholders of rapport established for

mutually beneficial communicative purposes. The last element is, not surprisingly, Settings, as context analysis and processing context in intercultural professional settings is paramount. One's intercultural competence is rooted in and powered by the capacity to understand the context itself and how different cultural backgrounds, mindsets, schemas and values may influence rapport and transactional outcomes.

In academic instruction, *reflection* plays an important role although there is difficulty in including it in university modules in a consistent way. Kolb (1984) introduced the so-called "experiential learning model" where reflection enables learners to turn their own experience into more abstract constructs that have to be grasped. Famously, Schon (1987) made the important differentiation between the concepts reflection on action and reflection in action, a research line that is often adopted when instructors create tasks for university students. Moreover, reflection is commonly and creatively used in instruction that is performed in a foreign language in the form of journals, individual/pair/group portfolios, oral presentations to a 'study partner' or in open class as well as written reports, proposals or reviews. (Helyer & Kay, 2015). Reflection in academic teaching and learning is essential. Through consistent reflection based work, students create a mindset that stretches like a muscle, allowing introspection, creative thinking skills development as well as a capacity for taking responsibility for one's learning path, which is more consciously documented. Intercultural competence is rooted in awareness of one's own learning benchmarks, comprehending one's own and other's cultural background in terms of similarities and differences may only occur when students build skills to reconcile difference and reflect.

In the present study the impact of reflection on learning is analysed through a rapport management framework as part of a university course in intercultural business communication. This is a less discussed aspect within the landscape of Romanian higher education.

RESEARCH AND PROCEDURE

The two research questions are:

Does conscious *focus on rapport management* influence students' perception of meaning attached to intercultural business communication material?

Do consistent *reflective practices* embedded in course material influence students' engagement in a collaborative environment?

Data were mainly collected from instructor's analyses of students' achievement of tasks as well as through observation of their online activity on a class forum. The instructor interprets students' perception of the meaning assigned by them to course assignments through rapport management and reflection.

This research study was conducted at the Faculty of Economics, "Babeș-Bolyai" University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Fifty-five graduate students at master's level specialising in Computer Science and Business Analytics have been involved throughout the duration of a semester as the students were attending the Intercultural Business Communication in English. The Intercultural Business Communication Course is a module of approximately 12 weeks that teaches theoretical background and practical applications of intercultural communication applied to particular business contexts. Students are introduced during lectures and seminars into the intricate mechanisms of functioning in an intercultural context by focusing on both theory and practice. Task-based projects as well as collaborative work is encouraged on subjects ranging from Intercultural Competence to Pragmatic Politeness and Cultural Models. Students have been informed that they participate in a research project and were also told that this participation is anonymous. We plan to reveal the results of the study to our new cohorts of students starting with October 2024. Drawing on the rapport management framework developed by Helen Spencer-Oatey, we have set the objective of assigning students some tasks that are based on dynamic rapport management observed in class related context and in the online environment (MLS-Moodle). As in this study rapport management was mediated by reflection, various reflection-based tasks were embedded in order to help students comprehend the value of the set assignments in terms of how they contribute to development of course related knowledge and skillset, to the class culture as a whole and to their professional life.

APPLICATION 1: DYNAMIC RAPPORT MANAGEMENT AND REFLECTION BY FOCUSING ON THE CONSTRUCT OF FACE

1.1. Task Title: Hold my mirror

1.2. Task Rationale

The construct of *face* lies at the very foundation of rapport management. It is a concept that has been constantly included in research bodies on interpersonal and intercultural communication. In her 2008 Rapport management framework, Spencer-Oatey included face alongside sociality rights and obligations, and interactional goals using the phrase "face sensitivities" (Spencer-Oatey, 2008, p. 14).

In intercultural communication, the issue of one's identity is of major importance, one of the most difficult question to answer being "Who are you?" students needing to revisit various categorisations and levels (national, cultural, regional, religious, work-related, group/sub-group, gender). It starts with a good look in the intercultural mirror where *face* only has meaning when and if interpreted by the other participants in the interaction. Face is rooted in Goffman's original interpretation and that is "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line the others assume he has taken during a particular contact." (Goffman, 1967, p. 5). Face as perceived by Goffman is different than Brown & Levinson's (1987) interpretation where it belongs primarily to the individual. For Goffman, face is dependent on how the others interpret and perceive us, it is negotiated through and in interaction. One may think they are "friendly" while at the very same time the interlocutor might interpret one's face as "arrogant". The purpose of the assignment is for students to acknowledge that the way one perceives himself/herself in interaction may or not coincide with the way he/she is perceived by others. In our opinion, this is the very first step to be taken in order to develop intercultural competence.

1.3. Task Content

Students need to record a brief oral presentation (1minute and 30 seconds) on the Padlet app (<https://padlet.com/>) that they have been granted access to in advance. Each student delivers a presentation entitled "This is my face" in which they are requested to talk about the way they think they are perceived by others (their other peers), mentioning strengths, weaknesses, any other relevant background related features, possible accomplishments or incidents that may support their input. Students may also reflect upon the way in which they may be interpreted differently on certain occasions by providing valid explanations. Once the oral presentation has been uploaded on Padlet (with students' prior permission), they are requested to post a comment on at least three other partners/cultural buddies by writing a comment on their own oral presentation, validating or reinforcing the posted messages. Neutral comments can also be posted where students do not have sufficient information to speak about a certain colleague. Collaborative reflection is consequently encouraged (written posts) as the activity is public for all group participants. Students can additionally post comments on answers they have received (including the instructor's comment). By doing the task, students get a certain degree of validation on how their *face/positive value* is perceived and interpreted by others and hence, get a sense of validation, of

being 'seen' in a certain way that they may not have been advised on before. The instructor carefully monitors answers in order to preserve a positive interactional atmosphere.

1.4. Scaffolding the application onto the TRIPS Model

The TRIPS Rapport Management Framework (Oatey & Lazidou, 2024, p. 11) is meant to enable professionals to deal with intercultural relational and communication challenges in order to repair and move forward positive interaction. To meet the end of the present study, we have applied the model onto several semester assignments in order to draw students' conscious attention on this set of elements they can pay attention to in order to correctly evaluate an intercultural exchange for the benefit of all parties involved. Students are aware of the components in the framework prior to applying it onto the task at hand. The particular context created for the scaffolding of the task onto the model is related to a crisis/critical situation that students need to resolve by applying the framework.

The specific context created for applying Assignment 1 onto the TRIPS framework simulates the context of a job interview held by groups of approximately fifteen students in order for them to internalize the usefulness of applying the framework in a high-stakes context where one's *face* becomes a differentiating element alongside interview performance and recruitment related documentation. Students have posted their "Hold my mirror" oral presentation and have also had the freedom of posting comments on their colleagues' profile so as to encourage interconnectedness and purposeful communication. Rapport has to be maintained, worked on and constantly engaged in order for it to be dynamic. *Interactions* (whether face-to-face or online) turn rapport into dynamic rapport. The genuine aspect of communication is preserved through encouragement of 'true' comments/posts that show care for the communicative needs and *positive face* (i.e. one's need to be liked, approved of by others according to Brown & Levinson, 1987) of all interactants. Next, the group of fifteen students have to select six students for occupying a new position and they have to analyse each profile based on the TRIPS Framework. The first element is *Triggers* (qualities, individual characteristics of the student that may lead to positive work relations suitable for the position, his/her communicative style). Secondly, the element *Reactions* is discussed (the very performance the student has had in the job interview, any other reactions to situations the student has revealed in his/her "Hold my mirror" assignment). *People* is the following element under scrutiny (the applicant's overall interconnectedness, his/her match to the corporate culture he/she wants to enter, strengths or

weaknesses that may turn the applicant into an employee). The last element in the framework is *Settings* (the personal values and beliefs held, the company profile, the specific context of the job and how the student may fit in the new context).

1.5. Stop for reflection

The reflective stage for this task takes place after the activity and takes the form of an individual reflection handout that each student turns in on the forum used (LMS). Students are requested to reflect back on the “Hold my mirror” assignment, the particular selection discussion and reflect on how their personal profile may be improved and enhanced in future situations.

1.6. Task Benefits

The assignment fosters positive rapport management as it takes place in a safe environment that enables students to share face-related information that later on leads to better understanding of self as well as of the existing interdependence between *face-as-I-see-myself* and *face-as-the-others-see me*. Rapport is enhanced as all students participate in the activity, being allowed to do so over a period of three weeks. Rapport is created and maintained through communicative effort and, hence, the assignment in itself is valuable as it leads to introspection and reflective comprehension of *self* and *others*. The most touching answers (i.e. the ones that have been liked the most) reinforce the collaborative interaction that is a major factor in enhancing participation and engagement. There is also a stronger comprehension of the concepts of positive and negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1987) on the part of students since one’s need to be liked and appreciated by others (i.e. positive face) and one’s need not to be impeded by others, to remain independent (i.e. negative face) intertwine upon post task reflection.

We will now proceed to present the second Application that is included in our analysis.

APPLICATION 2: RAPPORT MANAGEMENT AND REFLECTION BY FOCUSING ON ASSIGNED COURSE TOPIC ASSIGNMENT

2.1. Task Title: Country Profile. My take.

2.2. Task Rationale

Rapport is created, maintained and enhanced in collaborative academic interaction through participation and engagement in activities that enable learners to interact openly on course related topics. Intercultural communication topics

include attention provided to the acquisition of new theoretical constructs as well as the development of intercultural competence that is apparent in students' knowledge of/ application of/ and identification of intercultural strategies in order to deal with certain challenges that may occur. For this assignment to be completed, students need to reflect back on course material and concepts they have been taught in order to use them in a new context that is based on an application.

2.3. Task Content

The task requests students to bring one culture corresponding to one country they have researched in advance and to present it in class in pairs of two or groups. This assignment type is essential in tailoring course content and constructs onto students' own interpretation so that it leads to long-term benefits that pertain to both their personal and professional life. Countries/cultures are so very rich and dynamic that they cannot possibly be reflected accurately without open-mindedness and an ethnorelative cultural approach that is based on thorough research, direct contact, interactions with individuals belonging to the respective culture as well as an overall mindset that excludes generalisations and stereotypes that could be detrimental. This assignment has both a written and an oral form and its requirements include: geographical and historical references of the country/culture of choice, idiosyncrasies that may speak volumes of cultural specificity, cultural background as interpreted through direct/indirect contact, values, system of beliefs, approaches to leadership and status, attitude to time, nature, ethics, space, listening habits, communicative styles, managerial styles, behaviours during meetings and/or negotiations, etc. Based on course material and assigned additional reading, students bring the outside world into class. Discussions take place in English, collaborative reflection is encouraged in order for the content to be addressed. Students present word webs on each country profile which may reinforce the connection to the pre-taught material as well as a more aware comprehension within a contextualized reality.

2.4. Scaffolding the application onto the TRIPS model

We describe the task in the section below. A remote team project manager has to be selected in order to coordinate the efforts of a team of fifteen employees who are encountering problems delivering a product. The project manager is "assigned" a nationality out of all the countries/cultures presented during the Country Profile presentations. In groups, they have to decide-based on the TRIPS Framework-whether the project manager will be suitable for the specific job responsibilities. The

realities of the tasks change with a new session/a new group of students. Based on what they have learnt on the culture, students decide how the manager (i.e. Swedish manager) would adapt to the team. The elements to be analysed during “the meeting” are *Triggers* (specific cultural and national characteristics that may cause certain reactions or clashes, positive and less positive communicative qualities, the specific ways rapport may be created in the respective culture). Then, the element *Reactions* is analysed in accordance with the specific product and project circumstances (what could be the before, during and after attitude and reactions to time, language used, space, nonverbal communication, kick-off meeting rules, etc.). The third element is *People* (students analyse the other members of the team and their respective culture and make valid predictions as to what type of interconnectedness could exist, what impact the project manager may have on the other team members-all belonging to different cultures). Finally, the component of *Settings* is discussed in terms of impact of the remote environment, the multifaceted colours of the interaction due to project circumstances and the human factor.

2.5. Stop for reflection

The reflection stage occurs post activity and is done collaboratively by students posting a report of the most important decisions that have been made, the reason for these decisions as well as reflecting on how the other groups of students may have reacted to a similar task. The class forum is used on the university Moodle platform (Learning Management System used). The post reflection stage is essential as it re-circulates content points, topical concepts as well as the decisions themselves from a business and relational perspective.

2.6. Task Benefits

This activity has been labeled by students as being “the one I will remember the most” on the learning management system platform used as feedback forms are uploaded for all students to relate to and observe. English as a foreign language is also observed in criteria that range from discourse management to interactive impact on audience. All students are requested to upload their presentation and additional material (audio/video) used and there is an open forum discussion that takes place throughout the semester. Interactional reflection-to our mind- leads to positive and lucrative rapport management that is enhanced not only by dynamic participants in class but also by tailored comments on content in the virtual environment. The competitive edge of any businessperson activating in an intercultural context is rendered by his/her intercultural skills set that recognizes

primarily the fact that cultural differences are to be acknowledged and appreciated correctly while consequently adapting one's own interaction style and strategies in order to cope with this difference towards achieving a common transactional goal. This assignment strives to forge this competence in students.

The present study has selectively focused on these two types of activities, as we wanted to pinpoint the approaches and strategies we have used to encourage reflection and to maintain rapport. This is a constant struggle and the above-mentioned activities are but two of a set of fifteen that we have included for stated purpose in the Intercultural Business Communication course.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The two research questions posed by our study have been validated after instructor's observation of students' interaction pre-task, during-task, and post-task through students' submitted online work and reflection handouts.

Q1: Does conscious focus on rapport management influence students' perception of meaning attached to intercultural business communication material?

Students' engagement with the course material was 71% in terms of active participation and completion of tasks. We have observed a more complex approach to learning content material as well as a collaborative approach to solving tasks by being aware of what rapport elements they need to pay attention to. There was a clear orientation towards rapport enhancement in the group of students which is directly connected to their conscious decision to acknowledge the group and to involve themselves in strengthening interpersonal relationships. This is a constant effort as dynamic rapport management is to be maintained and encouraged.

Q2: Do consistent reflective practices embedded in course material influence students' engagement in a collaborative environment?

The second research question has been validated as well. Students reflective practices have developed through the embedded reflection based tasks in terms of quality of answers that show awareness and a development of skills needed to analyse, reflect on and re-interpret critical incidents. In a university context, we claim that reflection successfully mediates dynamic rapport management as well as task-related and interactional meaning in intercultural business communication instruction in a foreign language (i.e. English). Observations are either audio/video recorded or notes are made in written form. Secondly, the need to think about the

incident, to reflect on it, on the setting, the context, the participants, the exchanges that took place, the outcomes (the predicted ones and the actual outcomes). Thirdly, reflection is complete by re-assessing communicative events to cause an increase in both their quality and yield. This last stage lends itself to teamwork, as having a partner/partners will validate reflection in terms of its effectiveness.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

This study contends that achieving *meaning* in academic instruction as part of an Intercultural Business Communication Course includes rapport management focus and strategies as well as opportunities for a dialogic reflection process to occur consistently. We support collaborative interactions used for both rapport management and reflection as interactions may happen dynamically and may mimic the real working place of students.

We have provided a theoretical review of the main research literature on rapport management and reflection in order to better incorporate the applications used as samples for fostering rapport and reflection in class. Our analysis was informed by Oatey's and Lazidou's TRIPS Framework (2024) as we find its elements may enforce intercultural competence development due to the fact that it is concise, to the point and it encourages comprehensive evaluations of the most important interactional elements occurring not only in critical incidents but also in more common communication sequences.

In any type of communicative situations, miscommunication can occur particularly within the field of intercultural or cross-cultural communication. Loss of *face* is to be avoided at all costs irrespective of the cultural backgrounds (to various degrees) as professionals constantly strive for acceptance and resolution of conflictual instances.

Students' engagement level related to an assignment is particularly high when they can understand the relevance behind it, motivating them towards holding a more informed grasp of the "so what" part that very often leads them to the reinforcement of theoretical concepts that have been taught. What could be perceived as "low stakes" assignments may contribute significantly to increasing the confidence as students gain a sense of agency over their own work. Within the intercultural communication module context, this empowerment also speaks volumes in terms of articulating students' own sense of identity and presence.

Collaborative academic instruction that involves intercultural business communication study is a high priority in our opinion. Master's students are adults

who either prepare for a demanding working environment or are already employed. Collaboration between instructor and students is a two-way benefit as it creates-in and by itself- the foundation of rapport in a foreign language. Intercultural and cross-cultural communication topical discussions and theoretical conceptualisations within a university environment create a unique type of classroom culture that often replicates the world of work through focus on genuine case studies and the analysis of specific dilemmas. Students and instructor's values, beliefs, rules and guidelines, academic content that is often demanding co-exist in a learning environment that is primarily safe and dynamic.

This study has both theoretical and practical implications within the field of academic instruction as it provides a glimpse into how meaning can be reached and practised into existence.

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Tailoring Specialized Language Resources from an Ecolinguistic Perspective: Implications for Mediation and LSP Teaching

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Abstract: Mediation is fundamental in communicative settings, particularly in teaching and learning foreign languages for specific purposes. Language plays a key role in communicative mediation processes allowing sharing, creating, and communicating specialized knowledge. Specialized discourse processes are mediated through terms, specialised lexical units that hold linguistic, conceptual, and communicative value to their users. However, knowledge and specialised discourses are highly dynamic, and language resources, both monolingual and multilingual, used by language teachers, and other language professionals, need to adapt for constant changes over time (diachronic variation) and to account for social and cultural differences across distinct discursive communities within a domain (diastratic variation).

Using Aquaculture as a case study, and Portuguese as a working language, we will show how different discursive communities influence the terminology within a given domain, drawing on the theoretical framework of ecolinguistics. This approach particularly focuses on identifying relevant language user communities, covering a broad range of discursive communities within a specific domain. Particular attention is given to discursive relationships established between these communities. Using linguistic and terminological data gathered from a specialized *corpus*, and organized according to the identified discursive communities, we show that the domain's terminology can change within short time frames and is influenced by diastratic factors, especially in discourses outside the scientific and technical spheres. These dynamics are reflected in the set of terms used by each discursive community, on terminological variation, and the way knowledge flows between different social, cultural, and professional communities.

Consequently, we aim to show how these ecosystemic discursive relationships within a domain can affect specialized language resources, and communicative mediation activities, such as teaching specialised languages, or translation. Moreover, failure to register properly the terminology of a domain, can hinder adequate communication of specialised knowledge, impacting the processes of communicative mediation.

Keywords: *communicative mediation, specialised language teaching, terminology, terminological variation, language resources, ecolinguistics*

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INTRODUCTION

MEDIATION AND TERMINOLOGY

In a society marked by continuous change, communication is key for achieving common goals in social, cultural, economic, technical, and scientific development. However, communication frequently requires a form of mediation, bridging people and ideas. The concept of mediation is very broad and can be applied in different situations, conveying various meanings. It was first developed by Vygotsky (1986) when studying processes of language acquisition in children, particularly in second language learning, and it has been applied to other fields of knowledge and human activities.

In communicative settings, mediation occurs in many situations when language is involved (Rousseau, 2007, p.1). Communicative mediation can be defined as a complex process of construction and/or deconstruction of knowledge through verbalization, which involves conveying concepts as linguistic or discursive units or, adapting existing discourses, to make linguistic units accessible to different target audiences (Conceição & Zanola, 2020, p. 13). Communicative acts frequently involve linguistic processes, where information and knowledge flow across different spheres of activity, such as economic, social, or cultural domains. This flow is processed and made available to users through a broad range of linguistic resources. However, language users are not a single homogenous community. Instead, they gather to form discursive communities, united by common traits, such as a common professional activity, and are distinguished and regulated by unique contextual frameworks. As a result, communicative mediation processes can occur between different languages, and between different sociocultural groups (Noronha, 2023; Noronha & Conceição, 2020a).

Terminology plays a key role in communicative mediation by analysing specialized discourses within a specialized domain, and by providing language resources, specifically, terminological resources, to users, giving access to specialized information (Lino, 2020). This applies to mediation activities (e.g., translation and interpreting), as well as language teaching, namely in the context of teaching and learning foreign languages for specific purposes (LSP). Both rely on resources, such as glossaries or term bases, to support discursive processes and text production.

In specialized discourse, communicative processes are mediated by terms - specialized lexical units acting as communicative building blocks of knowledge, carrying linguistic, conceptual, and communicative value to users. However,

because knowledge is dynamic, specialized discourse evolves over time. This change, known as diachronic terminological variation, can occur even over short periods of time (Picton, 2014). Additionally, term variation can also be driven by social and cultural differences among distinct discursive communities within a domain, a phenomenon called diastratic terminological variation. Therefore, term representation in terminological resources must take this into account.

Term variation naturally occurs in specialized discourse, affecting the form (denominative variation) and the meaning of terms (Freixa & Fernández-Silva, 2017). This adds diversity and complexity to specialized discourse influencing the choice of the terms used and shared by a given discursive community. As terminological resources pursue compliance with international standards and principles of precision and reliability, the presence of term variation can represent a communicative disturbance, especially if variation is not properly controlled. In previous research papers (Noronha, 2023; Noronha & Conceição, 2020b), the authors analysed a set of entries from a popular term base, regularly used by translators and language professionals, and found an unexpectedly high number of terminological imprecisions and term variation, mainly at linguistic level (form). This information is presented to users without sufficient explanation, which has significant consequences: by trusting these resources, mediators, including language teachers, use and, consequently, disseminate forms that are not consensual outside the legislative and administrative field. Over time, and with repeated use, such forms tend to crystallize within certain communities, while being rejected by other professional groups. Since many terminological resources are largely based on the discourses of specific communities, especially scientific and technical ones, we questioned whether these communities could unevenly affect the terminology of a domain, and the representation of terms in terminological resources.

Thus, if different communities develop their own discourse and terminologies, the way terms are used and shared within the domain can also change across different social groups and over time. This observation led us to look for a different theoretical and methodological approach to better address term variation produced by distinct discursive communities. This can be especially relevant if our goal is to build terminological resources, tailored for communicative mediators and LSP teachers. Then, our key question is how to adapt the study of variation, and methodological approaches, to accommodate diverse discursive typologies of specialists, while respecting the usage of terms and variants, in order to build more effective terminological resources.

THE ECOLINGUISTIC FRAMEWORK

To provide an answer to this question, a wider perspective on a domain's terminology is required, addressing two key points. The first one involves the inclusion in terminological analysis of relevant discursive communities that are not usually covered in the most popular language resources. To do this, we need to broaden both the concept of *specialist* and *specialized discourse*.

Starting from commonly used discursive typologies for specialised discourse (vulgarised, specialised, semi-specialised), Rodríguez-Tapia (2018) suggested a different approach, by categorising discursive groups and spheres of activity. Rather than adhering to the classical typology (Bowker & Pearson, 2002; Guantiva et al., 2008), the author considers three main typologies of discursive actors:

- specialists (as text producers).
- mediators and professionals (groups with some degree of formal education).
- consumers, seen as passive intervenients, not considered text producers.

However, it remains necessary to accommodate discourses traditionally classified as non-specialized (non-academic or non-technical), and which are often overlooked in the development of terminological resources. To address this, we used an ecolinguistic theoretical framework, drawing on Steffensen and Fill's (2014) definition for language and ecolinguistics, and later refined by Kravchenko (2016):

(...) the study of (language understood as) the processes and activities through which human beings – at individual, group, population and species levels – exploit their environment in order to create an extended, sense-saturated ecology that supports their existential trajectories (Kravchenko, 2016, p. 111)

This definition situates language within the interactions between humans and their environment, i.e., in their extended ecology (Steffensen & Fill, 2014, p. 19). While acknowledging language as a system, it emphasizes its deep entanglement with human biology, positioning language as an agent that influences both the ecosystem and human existence, due to the way language is used in discourse. Language and conceptualization are interconnected, not only with each other but also with the extended ecological context, which includes cognitive, linguistic, social, cultural, and environmental factors. This naturalised view on language allows us to consider socio-cultural, ethnic and ecosystemic traits in terminology studies and to view language, cognition, culture, society, and nature as part of a unified whole. As a result, we can approach the concept of specialist and specialized discourse in a way that includes a diverse range of discursive communities.

COMMUNICATIVE CONTEXTS

The second point to consider, when incorporating diverse discursive communities, is selecting an appropriate strategy for linguistic data analysis, particularly when dealing with textual terminology methodologies which imply a specialized *corpus*. In this respect, we adopted the methodology proposed by Remigio Oliveira (2010), which focuses on what the author calls *communicative contexts* within a domain. These contexts represent:

(...) the specific circumstance in which the vulgarized discourse (...) is produced, considering the textual producers, their intention of communication and the public to whom they are addressed (Remigio Oliveira 2010, p. 252-253).

The author proposes a model for identifying relevant discursive communities and categorizes them using a dynamic and horizontal model (Figure 1). This model accommodates the inclusion and representation of different discursive typologies and of the interactions among all groups, which are not limited to adjacent levels, as seen in the approach of Bowker and Pearson (2002).

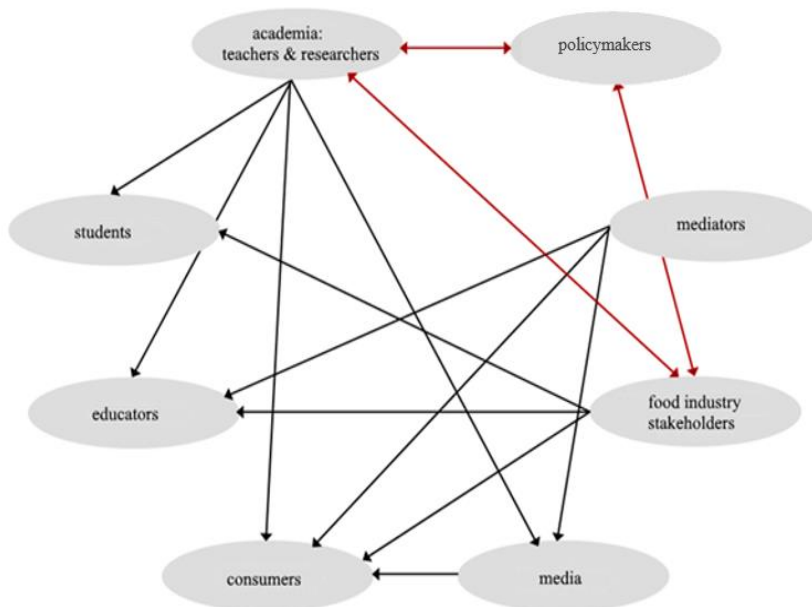


Figure 1. Communicative contexts model in the functional food domain
(Source: Remigio Oliveira, 2010, p. 237)

Therefore, using such a model allows for the representation of different communities and the flow of communication between them, based on social and cultural relationships. Similarly, authors in the field of ecolinguistics (Nash, 2011; Nash & Mühlhäusler, 2014) proposed a methodological approach for constructing a linguistic *corpus*. They conducted a comprehensive *ecolinguistic fieldwork*, identifying relevant groups of discursive communities as part of the *corpus* data collection process. Building on this fieldwork, and following the typology of Remígio Oliveira (2010) and Rodríguez-Tapia (2018), we also considered discursive actors such as communicative mediators, educational professionals and consumers in developing our preliminary model (Figure 2), which can be applied to any domain.

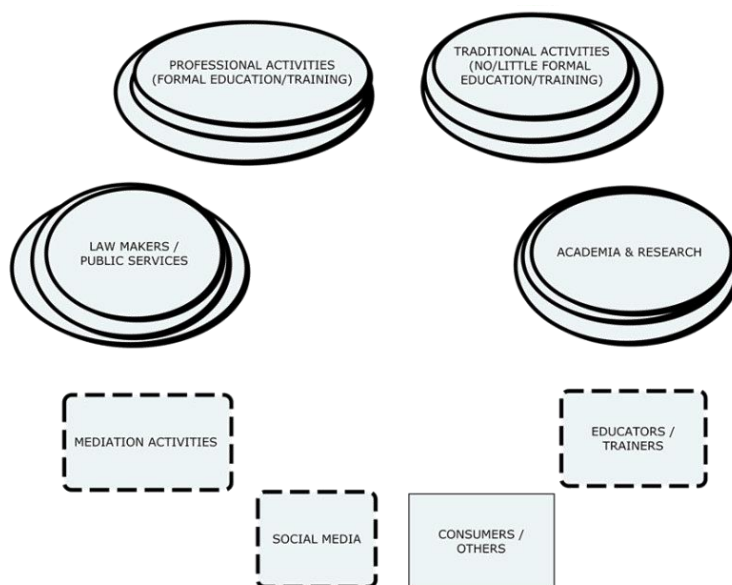


Figure 2 .Proposed model for the identification of communicative contexts. Multilevel ellipsis – text producers; Square, dashed-lines boxes - mediators; Square, solid line box- passive users/consumers. (Source: Noronha, 2023)

This model also accounts for a vertical hierarchy inside each communicative context, including teaching/learning relationships (Noronha, 2023). The development of the model was followed by fieldwork, in an attempt to identify the discursive communities within our selected domain, aquaculture. Subsequently, we regrouped these communities into communicative contexts and proceeded with the analysis of terminological data.

CASE STUDY - AQUACULTURE

Aquaculture is an ancient practice, with historical records dating back to 2000 BC in China, and is primarily related to food production. Today, the World Food Organization (WFO/FAO) defines aquaculture as:

The farming of aquatic organisms including fish, molluscs, crustaceans, and aquatic plants. Farming implies some sort of intervention in the rearing process to enhance production, such as regular stocking, feeding, protection from predators, etc. Farming also implies individual or corporate ownership of the stock being cultivated, the planning, development and operation of aquaculture systems, sites, facilities and practices, and the production and transport. (Source: FAO)

Aquaculture can take place in various systems and structures, in both fresh and salt water, and across diverse locations, such as on-shore, off-shore, inland, over wetlands, rivers or dams. Unlike fisheries, it is fundamentally a productive and non-extractive activity. Aquaculture also asserts property rights in relation to *what* is produced, and the place *where* it occurs. Recent advances are driven by the increasing global demand for food, which commercial fisheries can no longer support (Dinis & Rocha, 2021). It became increasingly relevant since the 1960 and gained momentum in the 21st century. According to the FAO, it is a rapidly growing economic activity, driven by significant contributions and knowledge transfer from universities and research institutions to producers (Figure 3).

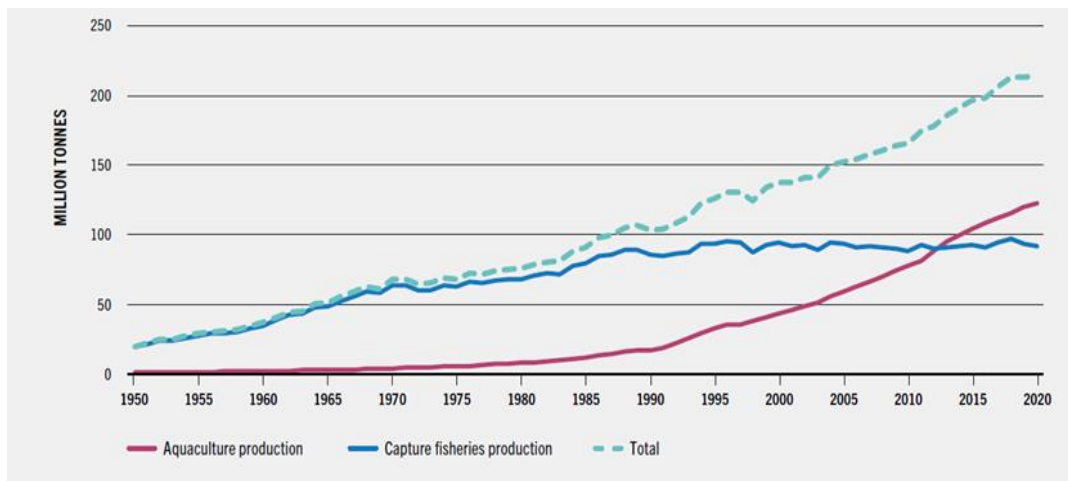


Figure 3 .Total production (in tonnes) at world level comparing Fisheries and Aquaculture
(Source: *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022*, FAO.)

In Portugal, despite its ancient roots in traditional shellfish culture, aquaculture has been an established industry since at least the 1960s, although

Rocha & Dinis (2019, p. 48) still consider it as a *new and emerging industry*. By encompassing various spheres of activity in scientific areas (marine biology, fisheries management, oceanography, chemistry, food safety, environmental sciences, veterinary medicine), along technical areas (engineering, transports), law and public administration, economics and social sciences, the domain is considered multidisciplinary (Dinis & Rocha, 2021). Moreover, it aligns with the definitions of both interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary domains (Engle, 2016). It is interdisciplinary because of the collaborative work among different disciplines to address common issues (e.g., environmental impacts of aquaculture). On the other hand, it is transdisciplinary in nature, due to the involvement of events and issues that extend beyond technical and scientific fields, encompassing socio and cultural domains, influencing diverse communities and stakeholders (Islam, 2014; Rocha & Dinis, 2019).

In terminology, as discussed by Conceição (2005) and Fréjaville (2009), aquaculture can be considered as a *composite domain*, one characterized by a high degree of heterogeneity, and a multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary nature. The domain includes scientific, technical, social, cultural, and environmental areas, and has impact on the natural and cultural landscapes, joining different disciplines, as well as sociocultural and professional communities. As a result, distinct discursive communities may be expected to interact, each employing specialised discourses with their own characteristics, namely, the terminology used as a means of communication.

As aquaculture becomes increasingly more relevant in the global economy, particularly in countries like Portugal a growing body of research is emerging, leading to a rise of textual materials produced by various discursive communities, with different purposes. However, in Portugal, aquaculture remains underrepresented in linguistic, lexical, and terminological resources (Noronha, 2018). Despite being a strongly regulated sector, at national and European levels, aquaculture is often grouped with fisheries in terminological databases such as Interactive Terminology for Europe (IATE). However, these resources are mainly designed for internal use and tailored to meet the needs of a particular area, especially administrative and legal fields. This leads to research challenges, as such situation contributes to the dissemination and crystallization of variants that are not fully accepted in other discursive communities (Noronha & Conceição, 2020a).

This highlights the importance of understanding how terminology can vary both across discursive communities (diastatic variation) and over short periods of

time (diachronic variation), and how these forms of variation can affect information provided by linguistic and terminological resources.

METHODOLOGY

COMMUNICATIVE CONTEXTS IN AQUACULTURE

Our initial step in addressing this domain involved identifying relevant stakeholders and communicative contexts through a comprehensive study focused on text producers. This enabled us to construct a socio-cultural framework by identifying and categorising specialists and text producers (Figure 4):

- a) Academia - formal higher education (scientific or technical); researchers, ID centres.
- b) Professionalized activities - professional formal education and training in the domain; full professional activity (companies, businesses).
- c) Traditional activities – professionals or other stakeholders with little or no formal training; traditional artisans.
- d) Legislators/administrators - formal instruction (academic, technical, or professional) in another field (law, accounting, management); usually public administration, policymakers.

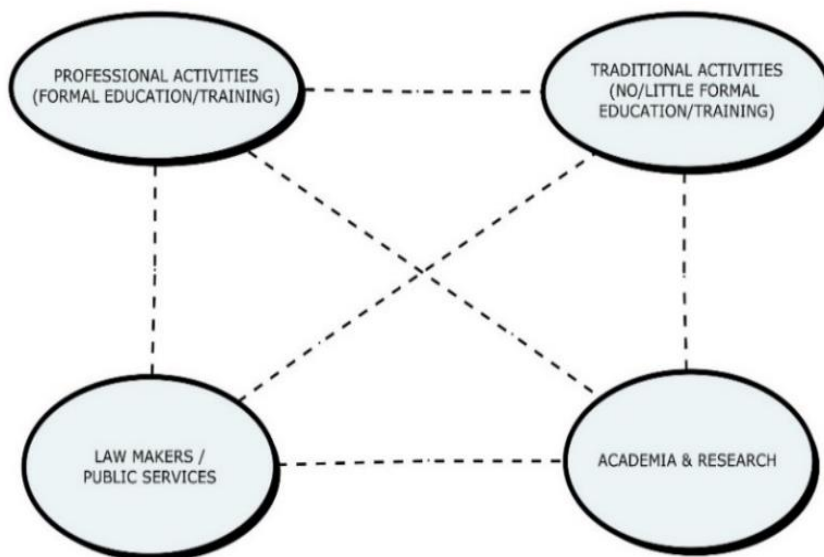


Figure 4 . Identified text producers in aquaculture as communicative contexts during the preparatory phase. Lines indicate possible communicative relations. Source: personal archive

After identifying the discursive communities and establishing a network of specialists, the next step involved was to collect linguistic data to build the *corpus*.

EXTRACTION CORPUS AND DATA ANALYSES

Our *corpus* included textual materials sourced from academia, aquaculture producers, local administration, and regulators, all retrieved from verified public documents and websites. Only written materials were considered. Due to the fact that the representativeness of written materials from traditional activities was extremely low, we combined this communicative context with the professional one. As our working language was European Portuguese, we exclusively selected Portuguese original texts, excluding any translated material. The collection of textual data was based on materials classified according to the following criteria:

- a) Diachronic criteria: a time frame of twenty years or less, i.e. between 2003 and 2023.
- b) Diastratic criteria: authors and discursive communities directly associated to the domain.

Following the data collection phase, we applied *corpus* linguistics methodologies, as described in textual terminology (Bourigault & Slodzian, 1999; Humbert-Droz et al., 2019; Picton, 2009). The selected materials were pre-processed to remove unnecessary noise (e.g., non-textual parts, numeric tables, figures). A *corpus*, Aqua-2023-T² was created and prepared for analysis using the *corpora* analyser Sketch Engine (Table 1).

Table 1. Corpus Aqua-2023-PT – Base information

Items	Textual data (Totals)
Tokens	254 262
Words	208 179
Sentences	7 273
N° of files	29

All documents were annotated at file level using Sketch Engine’s annotation tool, and *subcorpora* were established (Table 2) based on two major criteria: diachronic periods and diastratic categories (communicative contexts).

² *Corpus* Aqua-2023-PT. Available at <https://ske.li/aquacultura> [Retrieved on 1-05-2024]

Table 2. *Corpus Aqua-2023-PT – Sketch Engine annotation attributes for subcorpora*

Criteria	Attribute	<i>Subcorpora</i>	Words	%
Period	2010-2014	2010-2014	83855	40,28%
	2015-2019	2015-2019	82617	39,69%
	2020-2023	2020-2023	41705	20,03%
Communicative contexts	Academic	ACAD	104554	50,22%
	Professional	PRO	49385	23,72%
	Legislative	LEG	54239	26,05%

After establishing the *subcorpora*, we applied Sketch Engine's extraction tool (Keywords and Terms, Sketch Engine) to select potential term candidates, using a combination of absolute frequency of occurrence and the value of the *keyness score*, an association measure of the *termicity* of a word in the *corpus* (Keyness Score, Sketch Engine). The results were then submitted for selection and ranking to eliminate irrelevant or spurious forms (false positives, terms outside the scope of the domain). Term candidates were selected gradually, analysing each form of potential interest. Results were further analysed with Sketch Engine's search tools (concordance, collocations and cooccurrences) to confirm variants or the conceptual value of term candidates. This analysis allowed us to identify denominative forms that could reflect discursive differences between different communities and time periods. It also provided insight into the potential lexical-semantic relationships between term candidates. Conceptual value was confirmed (or not) by examining contextual definitions found in the corpus.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We looked for two types of information. First, we aimed to identify term candidates that contributed most to the domain's terminology within each period, and communicative context. Second, we looked for denominative variants that could reveal different usages by distinct discursive communities. The extraction process yielded two sets of term candidates (denominative forms) organized by period and communicative contexts. In total, we selected 1613 occurrences of denominative forms (Figure 5), including occurrences that appeared in more than one communicative context and/or period.

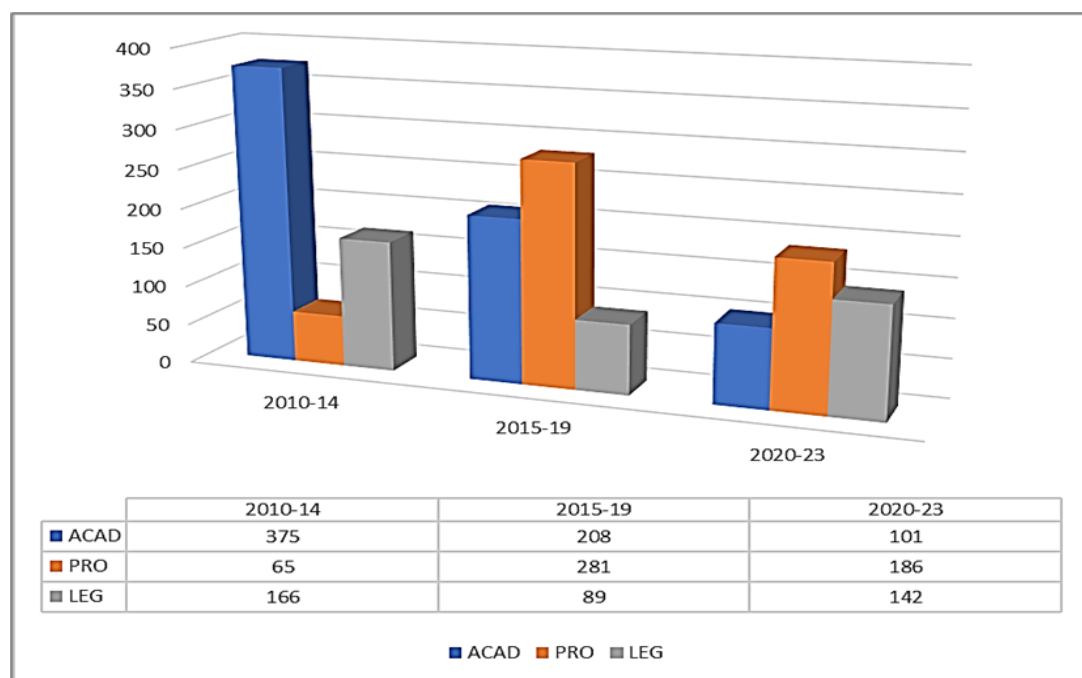


Figure 5. Frequency of denominative forms selected for corpus Aqua-2023-PT by period and communicative context

Source: personal archive

In what follows, we will highlight some of the most representative results that illustrate our perspective: the importance of covering the entire discursive ecosystem of a domain, rather than focusing on a single discursive community, in order to build robust terminological resources for communicative mediators and language teachers.

DIACHRONIC VARIATION AND DYNAMICS

Diachronic studies in terminology provide insight into the dynamics of a domain, allowing for an understanding of different trends in knowledge evolution, of the reasons for preferential use of certain terms, of the appearance/creation (neologisms) and disappearance of terms. Picton (2014) suggests that a change in the domain's interests (its focus), can be reflected in the increasing relevance of some topics, rather than a terminological change. In our study, we found cases that support Picton's observations, with varying frequencies of terms usage across the three examined periods (Table 3).

Table 3. Diachronic analyses. Examples of term candidates and variants.
Values in absolute frequency in corpus Aqua-2023-PT

Seed candidate term	denominative forms	2010-2014	2015-2019	2020-2023	Trend
<i>aquacultura</i> (aquaculture)	<i>aquacultura</i> (=aquicultura)	103	208	170	↓
	<i>aquicultura</i> (=aquacultura)	188	6	289	↑
<i>alteração climática</i> (climatic change)	<i>alteração climática</i>	2	0	32	↑
<i>bem-estar</i> (well-being)	<i>bem-estar</i> (<i>bem-estar animal</i> , <i>bem-estar dos animais</i>)	2	13	39	↑
<i>jaula</i> (cage)	<i>gaiola</i> (=jaula)	0	4	0	
	<i>jaula</i> (=gaiola)	3	20	23	↑
<i>mar aberto</i> (open water)	<i>mar aberto</i> (=offshore)	46	16	7	↓
	<i>offshore</i> (=mar aberto)	42	3	58	↑
<i>decreto-lei</i> (decree-law/executive act)	<i>decreto-lei</i>	66	1	23	↔
<i>pós-larva</i> (post-larva)	<i>pós-larva</i> (=semente)	5	2	1	
	<i>semente</i> (=pós-larva)	14	95	1	
<i>área de produção aquícola</i> (aquaculture production area, APA)	<i>Área de Produção Aquícola/APA</i> (=APA)	33	11	0	↓
	<i>zona de produção aquícola</i>	0	1	0	↓

Some terms originate in legal or administrative areas (*decreto-lei*, *área de produção aquícola/APA*) or are related to environmental issues (*bem-estar*, *alteração climática*). Term candidates with ascending trends (*alteração climática*, *bem-estar*, *jaula*, *offshore*), as well as their variants, do not necessarily represent a novelty in the *corpus*. However, they show a shift of focus, a preference for certain topics or declining interest in others. Neologisms and variants related to production methods were common, reflecting technological trends and short innovation cycles of the field. This is also evident in the case of *gaiola/jaula*, floating structures for rearing fish in open water. (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Cages (*gaiolas/jaulas*) for open water rearing of fish
 Source: Sea Project

This domain is characterised by the transfer of knowledge from academia to the professional and business sectors. Diachronically, it shows relatively short innovation cycles which result in frequent changes in its terminology.

DIASTRATIC VARIATION AND DIACHRONY

The relationships between discursive communities (academia, legislators, and professionals) may influence the flow of knowledge. On one hand, there are short innovation cycles, and a close connection between scientific research and producers. An illustrative example is the use of two variants for aquaculture: *aquacultura/aquicultura*. Both denominations are currently in use. However, we can observe that their use depends on the communicative context (Table 4). The increasing preference for *aquicultura* is related to the standardization efforts within the Portuguese state administration and European institutions, as aquaculture becomes more economically relevant. This explains the strong preference for the variant *aquicultura* in legislative communicative contexts (LEG). On the other hand, the variant *aquacultura* is favoured in academic and professional communicative contexts (ACAD and PRO). Another example is the use of *mar aberto* (open waters) versus the loan variant *offshore* (along with forms derived through lexical expansion). The variant *mar aberto* is preferred in legislative communicative contexts (LEG). Although *mar aberto* has been represented since the first period (2010-14), a diastratic analysis shows that the loanword *offshore* is mostly used in academic communicative contexts (ACAD), followed by producers (PRO).

Another example involves two variants referring to the post-larvae of clams (*Ruditapes decussata*, *Ruditapes philippinarum*): *pós-larva* and *semente* (seed). Clam rearing is an important economic activity in the wetlands of southern Portugal, and activity with deep historical roots, despite recent developments in the field.

Clam rearing involves burying juvenile clams (the “seeds”) in protected sandbanks (Figure 7), where they grow until reaching commercial size. The denominative variant is formed through metaphorical association with the word *semente* (seed). The variant *semente* is marked in the 2015-2019 period and it is mostly preferred by the community of producers (PRO), where it originated. Today,

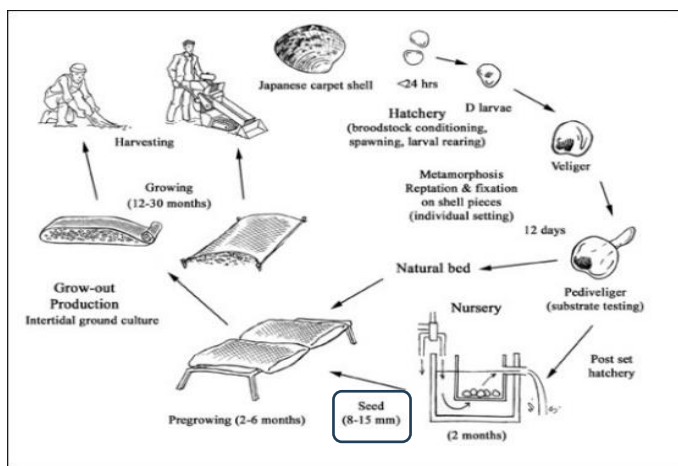


Figure 7 - Clam *Ruditapes philippinarum* production cycle
(Source : FAO)

semente is widely used, even in academic and legal contexts, replacing *pós-larva/juvenil* variants. This trend is largely due to developments in clam and oyster production in Portugal, and it shows the transfer of a variant originated in non-academic contexts into academic and legislative contexts. It also illustrates the importance of associating diachronic and diastratic studies, as emphasised by previous research in the field (Picton et al., 2020, p. 104).

Therefore, from an ecolinguistic perspective, the factors that may influence the terminology of the domain should be carefully considered and the discursive relationships between different communities should be evaluated before selecting a single discursive community to represent the domain's terminology. Diachronic analysis should also account, among other factors, for diastratic differences, namely the communicative contexts in which terms are used.

DENOMINATIVE DIASTRATIC VARIATION

Diastratic variation is not merely a process of vulgarization or determinologisation (Delavigne, 2017), as it can also reflect an actual terminological boundary between, or within, distinct discursive communities. Differences may arise from a community's choice of a preferred denomination, conditioned by social, cultural, and even natural events, which are part of the domain's expanded ecosystem. As scientific research gained relevance in Portugal, particularly since the 1980s, the domain became subject to robust legal regulations concerning environmental and public health, as reflected in the discourses and texts produced by public administration entities and regulators. The LEG *subcorpus*, created with these discourses, has a specific register and shows some relevant diastratic denominative variants. We previously discussed the dichotomy *aquacultura* and *aquiculture*, also explored in earlier works (Noronha, 2018). However, these studies focused mainly on term differences between academic discourses and the terminology published and disseminated by well-known terminological resources, produced by international organizations. In contrast, this work uses a specialized *corpus* to directly analyse terminological differences across communicative contexts, confirming the link between certain forms and their communicative contexts (Table 4). As observed, the LEG *subcorpus* shows a strong preference for *aquicultura*, whereas the ACAD and PRO *subcorpora* favour *aquacultura*. This choice affects all related forms, including those produced by lexical extension (*aquicultura marinha* / *aquacultura marinha*, *aquicultura de água doce* / *aquacultura de água doce*) or derived forms (*aquicultor/aquacultor*).

Table 4. Diastatic analyses. Examples of term candidates and variants.
Values are absolute frequency in corpus Aqua-2023-PT

Seed candidate term	denominative forms	ACAD	LEG	PRO
<i>aquacultura</i> (aquaculture)	<i>aquacultura</i> (= <i>aquicultura</i>)	365	3	133
	<i>aquicultura</i> (= <i>aquacultura</i>)	5	475	3
<i>jaula</i> (cage)	<i>gaiola</i> (= <i>jaula</i>)	4	0	0
	<i>jaula</i> (= <i>gaiola</i>)	31	5	10
<i>mar aberto</i> (open water)	<i>mar aberto</i> (= <i>offshore</i>)	10	40	6
	<i>offshore</i> (= <i>mar aberto</i>)	88	9	19
<i>sistema multitrófico</i> (multitrophic system)	<i>aquacultura multitrófica</i>	4	0	0
	<i>aquicultura multitrófica</i>	0	2	0
	<i>sistema multitrófico integrado</i>	0	0	1
	<i>IMTA</i> (= <i>sistema multitrófico integrado</i>)	7	1	1
<i>pós-larva</i> (post-larva)	<i>pós-larva</i> (= <i>semente</i>)	3	3	2
	<i>semente</i> (= <i>pós-larva</i>)	4	4	101

This reveals a terminological proximity between the ACAD and PRO *subcorpora*, reflecting the close social connections between the academic and professional spheres of activity, particularly as many emerging aquaculture producers come from academic backgrounds. The preference for loanwords such as *offshore* in the ACAD context may be attributed to the influence of English in many universities and research laboratories. In turn, the LEG *subcorpus* comprises specialists from the administrative and legislative sectors, who typically employ more conservative discourses, communicative styles, and structures (Peruzzo, 2017). The selection of terminology is influenced by standardization concerns, clear communication and a specific discursive style.

In addition to differences in denominative forms, we also noted the presence of term candidates that are either exclusively used within a given communicative context or occur with higher frequency. Our findings align with the observations made by Picton and Dury (2017), who identified a similar situation when analysing *corpora* from different specialist communities. They also noted the occurrence of many terms from a specific area, related to a given discursive community. The authors highlight the existence of distinct discursive *strata* - a theoretical *stratum*, and an operationalized *stratum* - linking differences in specialists' discourse to informed terminological choices. Similarly, in our domain, many terms show a higher frequency, indicating a greater probability of use and a preferential choice for specific terms within certain communicative contexts (Table 5).

Table 5. Corpus Aqua-2023-PT: most frequent denominative forms by communicative contexts

	ACAD	F	LEG	F	PRO	F
1	<i>aquacultura</i> (aquaculture)	365	<i>aquicultura</i> (aquaculture)	474	<i>ostra</i> (oyster)	324
2	<i>água</i> (water)	285	<i>água</i> (water)	244	<i>água</i> (water)	232
3	<i>dieta</i> (diet)	203	<i>viveiro</i> (clam seebed)	139	<i>bivalve</i> (bivalve)	199
4	<i>larva</i> (larvae)	190	<i>decreto-lei</i> (executive act)	105	<i>semente</i> (seed)	94
5	<i>ostra</i> (oyster)	188	<i>ostra</i> (oyster)	88	<i>aquacultura</i> (aquaculture)	83
6	<i>peixe</i> (fish)	156	<i>recurso hídrico</i> (hydric resource)	84	<i>larva</i> (larvae)	75
7	<i>copépode</i> (copepod)	147	<i>produção aquícola</i> (aquaculture production)	72	<i>produtor</i> (producer)	65
8	<i>DAE (Dias Após Eclosão)</i> (days after hatching)	137	<i>peixe</i> (fish)	64	<i>mesa</i> (oyster bed)	34
9	<i>ovócito</i> (oocyte)	82	<i>pesca</i> (fishery)	43	<i>molusco bivalve</i> (bivalve mollusc)	32
10	<i>malformação</i> (malformation)	70	<i>produtor</i> (producer)	40	<i>mortalidade</i> (mortality)	32
11	<i>dourada</i> (gilthead seabream)	67	<i>mar aberto</i> (offshore)	36	<i>ostra-do-pacífico</i> (pacific oyster)	32
12	<i>fêmea</i> (female)	66	<i>bivalve</i> (bivalve)	34	<i>ração</i> (feed)	31
13	<i>lípidio</i> (lipid)	66	<i>mesa</i> (oyster bed)	34	<i>juvenil</i> (juvenile)	31
14	<i>efluente</i> (effluent)	64	<i>eliaço</i> (steel mesh)	30	<i>manuseamento</i> (handling)	31

In the academic communicative context (ACAD), the most frequent terms are related to scientific research in the field: *malformação* (malformation), *dieta* (diet), *larva* (larvae), *copépode* (copepod), *DAE – Dias Após Eclosão* (days after hatching), *ovócito* (oocyte). On the other hand, in the PRO *subcorpus*, we mostly find terms which result from practical usage within the production cycle. They mainly denote operations and steps of productive processes, handling of objects or raw materials: *ração* (ration/feed), *molusco bivalve/bivalve* (bivalve mollusc/bivalve), *semente* (seed), *produtor* (producer), *mesa* (oyster bed), *manuseamento* (handling). In the LEG *subcorpus*, the prominence of terms related to administrative and legislative areas is evident: *decreto-lei* (executive act), *regulamento* (regulation), *licenciamento* (licensing). Additionally, some terms, though shared with other communicative contexts, occur with greater frequency in this *subcorpora* (Figure 8): *produção aquícola* (aquaculture production), *mar aberto* (open water/offshore) and *recurso hídrico* (hydric resource).

<i>Subcorpus LEG</i>		
Term	Frequency	Frequency per million
1 produção aquícola	100	1,657.91
2 mar aberto	40	663.16
3 recurso hídrico	94	1,558.43
<i>Subcorpus ACAD</i>		
Term	Frequency	Frequency per million
1 produção aquícola	8	62.65
2 mar aberto	11	86.14
3 recurso hídrico	25	195.77
<i>Subcorpus PRO</i>		
Term	Frequency	Frequency per million
1 mar aberto	5	75.48
2 produção aquícola	3	45.29

Figure 8. Examples of frequent forms in the LEG subcorpora compared to the ACAD and PRO subcorpora

This shows that terminological variation is not just a matter of denominative forms, but also encompasses a set of terms preferred by a given communicative context, and this has significant implications. One key consequence concerns the representation of terms in knowledge bases and terminological resources: if we rely on one single communicative context to represent an entire domain, we may fail to record other relevant terms (denominative forms and concepts). A second consequence, stemming from the first, is the need to redefine the concept of specialized discourse and what constitutes a specialist, thereby broadening the scope of terminological analysis. This is particularly relevant when discursive communities have discursive typologies that are not typically classified as specialized discourse as noted by Picton & Dury:

Diastratic variation in language for specific purposes cannot be limited to the analysis of differences in discourse between specialists and non-experts and is not reflected in the standard definitions available for the general language which limit it to differences in discursive uses according to social class. (2017, p. 76):

Therefore, discursive communities use, share, and change modify the terminology of a domain in different ways, making it impossible to fully control variation by focusing solely on one group of discursive actors. A comprehensive terminological

resource should include detailed information on term usage and variants, ensuring that users are equipped to make informed choices.

AN ECOLINGUISTIC APPROACH TO TERMINOLOGY

During the analysis of this domain, we considered distinct social and discursive contexts and their interrelations through an ecolinguistic perspective, a holistic approach that allows us to observe different linguistic phenomena (Couto & Couto, 2016). Additionally, many terms and their variants are shaped not only human factors, such as social, cultural, ethnic ones: they are also by the ecosystems where human societies inhabit (Nash, 2011; Nash & Mühlhäusler, 2014). Examples that illustrate the role of the ecosystem on the domain include: *alterações climáticas* (climate change), *bem-estar* (well-being), *impacto ambiental* (environmental impact). Other cases demonstrate how users can adapt their lexicon according to the needs of their activity. An example is *maré* (tide), a common noun (feminine, singular) and two related terms: *fazer a maré* (verbal multiple term), meaning to regularly bring clams/oysters reared in tanks out of the water to emulate the tidal cycle; *ir à maré* (a verbal multiple term), referring to harvesting bivalves in natural sand beds during the low tide period. Thus, by viewing discursive communities as part of the ecosystem, an ecosystemic perspective helps us understand how those communities use terms, interact with each other and engage with their environment. Examining the type, intensity, and direction of discursive relations within this domain, enabled us to redefine the initial model, highlighting relevant discursive relations:

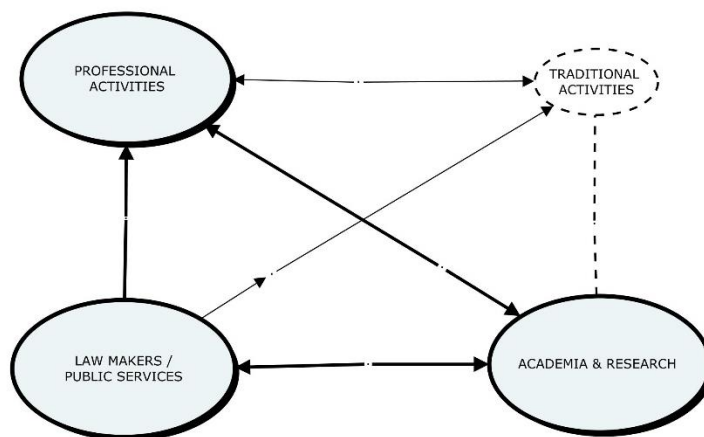


Figure 9. Communicative contexts in aquaculture – Discursive relationships among specialists as text producers. Source: personal archive

In Figure 9, unidirectional arrows represent the main direction of communication and information flow, while bidirectional arrows indicate reciprocal communication and information flow. Dashed arrows signify unknown, limited, or even absent communicative relationships, that cannot be confirmed in our *corpora*. For example, communication mainly flows from academia (ACAD) to professionals (PRO), though a bidirectional flow is possible.

However, this final model should be considered specific to our case study. In other domains, it would need to be adapted to reflect its characteristics, as each domain presents distinct traits and challenges. This point is highlighted by Nash and Mühlhäusler (2014), as well as Albuquerque (2015), who refer to it as *empirical minimalism*. The authors argue that each domain must be treated as a unique case study, advising caution when applying methodologies, procedures, and conclusions from one domain to another.

CONCLUSIONS

In this work, we focused on how research on term dynamics and term variation should adapt to enhance terminological resources and provide informed options to LSP teachers and communicative mediation activities regarding the use of terms and their variants. Our aim was to identify a methodological approach that enables the representation of different specialist discursive typologies in terminological resources, while respecting the specific uses of terms within discursive contexts.

We explored how the terminology of a domain can be influenced in multiple ways, especially when different communities of specialists coexist. These influences occur at the level of denominative forms (denominative variation) and in the selection of terms preferred by each discursive community. Term variants should be integrated into linguistic resources provided they are supported by reliable information about the communicative contexts in which they are used. The choice of denominative forms may depend on the discourse register, and it may be relevant to a mediator, whether translators, editors or science communicators and LSP teachers, to make informed decisions. Failing to include information about variants can lead to communication gaps and/or misunderstandings that mediators and LSP teachers may be unable to identify.

To address the terminological variety of composite domains such as aquaculture, we sought a methodology that integrates both diachronic and diastatic factors, helping to identify possible gaps in terminological surveys. It is

essential to understand who the specialists are and to extend research beyond academic or legislative contexts, studying other relevant communities. While adopting a methodology that encompasses a broad range of specialists is a complex task, it is not unmanageable. This process can begin with ecolinguistic fieldwork, which involves establishing a network of contacts, identifying discursive communities and mapping disciplinary areas. Such a methodology can be adapted to another geographical contexts, applied to different domains (Noronha, 2023) and used for the development of multilingual terminologies in different languages.

Our next step is to build a terminological resource that incorporates terminological variation, while ensuring the representativeness of discursive communities, contributing to the safeguarding of the Portuguese terminology in aquaculture. Moreover, by focusing on the linguistic analysis of terms and term variation as a reflection of terminological dynamism, we aim to support communicative mediation activities and LSP teachers in a near future. This stems from a commitment to preserve cognitive, cultural and linguistic heritage, as well as to contribute to the design and implementation of more equitable and more sustainable language and communication policies.

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Collaborative Writing and Mediation in ESP Classes: How Students Build Interactions

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Abstract: Collaborative writing has been employed in second and foreign language learning for decades (Storch, 2013), and the recent affordability of technology for collaborative writing has added new dimensions of interaction and skills integration. With an emerging employment environment driven by globalization trends and demanding a more and more flexible and adaptable graduate workforce, collaborative activities for language learning in higher education provide ample opportunities to simulate realistic conditions where students have to work together and produce outcomes which are the result of negotiated effort and meaning (Bremner, 2010). Collaborative writing takes on the dimension of writing to learn the L2 but also that of learning to write, that is to produce shared meaning and knowledge (Manchon, 2011). Mediating communication to construct this shared meaning becomes central and lays the foundations for building a variety of interactions in the process of language and integrated skills learning (Swain, 2010). The present study reports on collaborative activities for ESP learning in higher education and investigates how students perceive their collaboration and interactions while writing together. The students' responses to a reflection and feedback survey are analyzed with the aim of understanding the dynamics of their collaborative writing and the mediation that facilitates the complex product- and process-oriented learning.

Keywords: *English for Specific Purposes, collaborative writing, mediation, L2 learning and teaching*

INTRODUCTION

At its core, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is targeted to language instruction designed to meet the specific needs of learners in particular professional or academic fields. By focusing on industry-specific vocabulary, communication styles, and contextual language use, ESP courses equip learners with the skills necessary to perform effectively in their chosen careers. This specialized approach to L2 learning not only enhances workplace communication but also supports the development of critical workplace skills such as problem-solving, collaboration, and intercultural competence. With a long-standing tradition in L2 teaching and

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learning (Storch, 2013; Li & Zhang, 2023), collaborative writing has become part of the ESP approach as it contributes to simulating the context and required skills of workplace language use and communicative competence (Storch, 2013; Bremner, 2010).

Neomi Storch (2013) defines collaborative writing 'as the sharing of labour (co-labour) and thus collaborative writing, in its broadest sense, means the co-authoring of a text by two or more writers' (p.11). In her seminal work on collaborative writing in L2 classrooms, she distinguishes *collaborative* from *cooperative*, based on a model of dyadic interactions (her study refers to pairs but can be extended to small group interaction) with two intersecting dimensions: equality and mutuality. Equality refers to the learners' level of contribution and control over the task, while mutuality refers to the learners' level of engagement with each other's contribution. Collaborative interaction is characterised in her model by high equality and high mutuality, meaning that both students in the pair contribute to all aspects of the task, engage with each other's suggestions, pool their linguistic resources and share responsibility for the task. In cooperative pairs equality is high but mutuality is low, which means that both students in the pair contribute to the task but engage less with each other's contribution, are less willing to consider each other's suggestions and are often in conflict during the process of learning through co-authoring texts.

Further insights into the concept of collaborative writing come from Ede and Lunsford (1990) who identify three features of collaborative writing: (1) substantive interaction in all stages of the writing process, (2) shared decision-making power over and responsibility for the text produced and (3) the production of a single written document. They foreground the fact that collaborative writing should be seen both as a distinct process and a product. In the process of writing together, learners interact, contribute to planning, generate ideas, and deliberate about the text structure, editing and revision. They negotiate meaning and thus create shared understanding and shared expression of ideas.

This view is in line with Manchon's (2011) dimensions of writing in the L2: writing to learn the L2 and also learning to write, that is to produce shared meaning and knowledge. Mediating communication to construct shared meaning becomes central and lays the foundations for building a variety of interactions in the process of language and integrated skills learning (Swain, 2010). The CEFR defines mediation as the situation when 'a learner/user acts as a social agent who creates bridges and helps to construct or convey meaning' (Council of Europe, 2020, p.23). The CEFR Companion Volume (2020) emphasizes that mediation is particularly

relevant for the classroom in connection with small group, collaborative tasks (Council of Europe, 2020, p.36). Collaborative writing tasks and mediation skills are intrinsically connected and play a crucial role in L2 communicative competence development.

The present study reports on collaborative activities for ESP learning in higher education and investigates how students perceive their collaboration and interactions while writing together. In this specific context of learning, *mediating concepts* is the skill that students employ frequently and develop while writing together (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 109). Facilitating collaborative interaction with peers, collaborating to construct meaning, managing interaction and encouraging conceptual talk are mediating actions observable in the students' interaction sequences.

COLLABORATIVE WRITING IN ESP: CONTEXT OF PRESENT STUDY

The present study investigates a series of class projects in English for Specific Purposes with the aim of identifying the learners' perceptions regarding L2 learning through writing collaboratively, as well as the types of interactions (Oxford, 1997) employed to achieve task aims. A class of first year Engineering students carried out two projects along the second semester of the 2023/2024 academic year, where the main outcomes were written documents on which they had to work together, in teams of three or four learners. Research shows that a number of factors impact the effectiveness of teams in collaborative writing, including L2 proficiency and various socio-cultural aspects (DiNitto, 2000; Norris & Manchón, 2012; Storch, 2013). In the case studied here, self-selected teams were formed at the beginning of the semester and were stable for both projects. Students' proficiency was fairly homogenous at a B2+/C1 level, tested at the beginning of the academic year. Self-selected teams tend to develop organic dynamics during collaboration, are less prone to conflict and stay engaged and mutually supportive (Kinsella, 1996). The first project lasted five weeks and its outputs were a survey on peers' attitude on a topic of choice. Students explored shared interests on various topics related to the *2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development* and decided to question classmates on their attitude and interest related to one of them. The questionnaires students developed contain five close-ended questions and were administered anonymously to peers in class. Collected responses constituted the starting point of a data-analysis report, the second output of this project. In the remaining 6 weeks of the semester, students worked on a number of job-finding activities, such as analyzing and writing job ads, writing CVs

and letters of application. The collaboratively written outputs in this case were a job advertisement, a candidate profile and a product comparison memo for each group. Students wrote individually their CVs and letters of application which were discussed in the groups and improved based on peer-feedback.

All project activities were carried out in class, where samples and templates of documents were given as forms of scaffolding genre and language learning. Students studied these documents together under the supervision of the lecturer, who acted as facilitator. Class discussions clarified important aspects before students could proceed to writing their own texts. Collaboration was encouraged at all stages of projects, not only in the writing part.

Following Stoller&Myer's (2019) framework for project-based language learning, the two projects that included collaborative writing task were designed with large learner autonomy in mind, in order to provide ample opportunities for learner engagement, both with content and with peers. Bulent&Stoller (2005) underscore that projects which maximize benefits for language, content, and real-life skill learning 'require[s] student collaboration and, at the same time, some degree of student autonomy and independence' (p.11).

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODOLOGY

In order to understand the students' collaborative practices for writing the ESP project outputs, two research questions (RQ) can be formulated:

RQ1: What are the students' perceptions about learning ESP through collaborative writing?

RQ2: How do students interact while completing the collaborative ESP writing?

Data were collected from student participants to the two projects by using online feedback and reflection surveys. Students completed one survey at the end of the first project and another at the end of the second project. The two feedback surveys contained the same 4 questions (both closed- and open-ended questions), with two extra included in the second survey. Responses were anonymously collected.

Thirty students participated to the ESP projects and submitted collaboratively written documents. However, only twenty-two responses ($N_1=22$) were collected for the first survey and ten ($N_2=10$) for the second survey.

Data from the closed-ended questions were investigated using descriptive statistics, while for the open-ended questions a qualitative content analysis of the two corpora was conducted. As the corpora were quite small (total no of tokens =

2727), intra-coder reliability was ensured by coding the data twice, which was considered sufficient for the aims of the present study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In both surveys, students were asked to give feedback and reflect on their learning by imagining they were writing to a student that was going to take the same ESP course the following year. These narrative responses allow interesting insights into how students perceive learning through collaborating during the two projects.

RQ1: WHAT ARE THE STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT LEARNING ESP THROUGH COLLABORATIVE WRITING?

Four major themes could be identified as pertaining to the first research question of the present study:

T1: Successful outcomes of learning

T2: Successful pathway to learning

T3: Communication and engagement

T4: Experiential dimension of learning

The first two themes identified when coding students' responses to the open-ended questions of the surveys are interconnected and reflect complementary perspectives on learning. For the students involved, learning in an ESP class through collaborative writing led to successful outcomes (completion of tasks) or good end-results, a qualitative self-evaluation of teamwork (T1). Some of the students' answers were:

'We did a great job'

'We achieved all our tasks'

'We produced a good survey and a good report'

'We [did] our best to achieve a result as clear as possible'

The responses above reflect a product-oriented perspective on learning, one that is convergent with the learning objectives of the collaborative writing tasks, that of producing quality written pieces in ESP. Students acknowledged this dimension of learning and reflect critically on the quality their own work.

However, the product-oriented perspective was not the only lens used to reflect. The second theme identified can be labeled 'successful pathway to learning' (T2) as it clearly emerges from a process-oriented perspective on learning. In their

feedback students described the journey they had taken to achieve the successful results. They point to steps and actions necessary to complete tasks, such as doing research on their topics, checking the quality of their work, project management aspects, and time management. Some of the students' answers were:

'[...] ensuring that each aspect of the project received the attention it needed'

'We learnt [...] to find meaningful information as the quality of it was of crucial importance'

'After gathering all the information we needed, we worked together...'

'I liked using the technology associate with it'

'[...] to ensure the conciseness of the text'

'My research skills improved'

'I have learned how to use digital resources efficiently since time was limited and we had to work pretty fast.'

'I learned how to work with the data'

In the second survey administered after the completion of both class projects that included collaborative writing tasks, 40% of students reported that time management was one of the challenges/the only challenge they encountered.

Following Breen (2001) and Dörnyei & Kormos (2000), among others, who show that learners bring to the classroom a wide cluster of attitudes which influence their perception of learning, Storch (2013) points out that students' perceptions about collaborative writing are based on a similar convergence of beliefs and attitudes which become evident only when observing students during pair or small group interactions. While working collaboratively on written tasks, students have preferences that shape their actions (such as working harder/focusing on tasks they like) and take actions that reinforce their beliefs about learning (Aragão, 2011, discussed in Storch, 2013).

The students participating to the present study also display a complex picture of beliefs and views on learning which they brought to the class and employed when reflecting on their learning. Their combined product- and process-oriented perspective about learning underlies the commitment to completing all tasks, their willingness to take the necessary action to do that (research, information gathering, technology use) and can explain their maintained motivation. However, I concur with Storch's conclusion that there is a need of longitudinal, extensive studies to focus on how the students' beliefs and attitudes evolve as they experience collaborative writing activities (2013, p. 117) in order to design collaborative writing tasks which would further enhance language learning in specific contexts.

Collaborative writing cannot work in the absence of good communication within the group. This third theme identified in the students' feedback and

reflection responses links into how they perceived engagement with group members and engagement with tasks (T3). Most of the responses pointed to the fact that collaboration requires good communication and that team members were satisfied with how they communicated in their respective teams. Terms such as 'great communication', 'effective communication', 'clear communication' were frequent in the data and that led to the conclusion that they had a 'dedicated group'.

'The key to successful collaboration is communication'

Moreover, students' reflections covered the multiple dimensions of communication: listening, speaking, negotiation, conflict resolution. They acknowledge successful communication because they listened to diverse opinions and expressed theirs openly, answered one another's questions, and displayed mutual respect. Some of the students' answers were:

'It was nice to listen to everyone's opinions and take them into consideration'

'I have learned that in order to make the project you have to listen to your colleagues and their ideas.'

'We said what everyone had to say, and we tried to find the best option.'

'I really think that we managed to connect well.'

'The collaboration and communication were great, each bringing new ideas to the table, new ways to solve problems.'

'Clear communication and mutual respect were key to our effective collaboration'

Students did not lack critical thinking when evaluating the engagement aspect of teamwork. Some of the responses mentioned lack of engagement of team members (*'I think people are lazy, again, this is a truism, but I also think we should do something to work around this laziness'*) and some of the difficulties to overcome concurrent diverging opinions:

'It was a bit difficult to communicate while writing the reports or memos since we all had to agree on what to say, how, how much and where. We discussed every issue but that took much more time than it was supposed to.'

'[a challenging aspect] was including everyone in the work'

In the reported projects, collaborative writing has foregrounded the need for negotiation and for mediation especially because students were collaboratively working on language learning tasks.

Studies show that negotiation of meaning during collaborative writing tasks provides ample opportunities for peer learning during meaningful interactions called *language related episodes (LRE)*. While engaging in understanding content,

searching for information, discussing options, or deciding on form, students employ their mediation skills and have ample opportunities for *linguaging*. *Linguaging* has been defined as the “process of making meaning and shaping knowledge and experience through language” (Swain, 2006, p.98). Storch (2013) states that, in collaborative writing activities, *linguaging* takes two forms: private *linguaging* (‘vocalised and hence audible private speech’, p.52) and collaborative dialogue where knowledge of team members is elicited and offered as suggestions, opinions, correction, or mediated content. During collaborative dialogue ‘learners can build on each other’s suggestions, collectively scaffolding their performance to a level unattainable had they worked on their own’ (Storch, 2013, p.52).

In the present study, the LRE were indirectly reported by the feedback and reflection notes students made. They described the time-consuming negotiation and search for optimal solutions in their groups which appear to have focused both on content of tasks (‘*what to say*’/‘*how much*’) and form (‘*how*’, ‘*where*’). They also made extensive use of the pool of available knowledge or drew on the more proficient students for resolving difficulties related to L2 use. When working on the writing tasks, the majority of students stated they addressed L2 difficulties by either asking someone in their respective team or by discussing the issue in the group (46% for the first project and 56% for the second project). The pooling of linguistic knowledge and the provision of peer scaffolding during collaborative writing is consistent with Donato’s (1994) concept of *collective scaffolding*. Donato underscored that such collective scaffolding enables students to perform beyond their existing level of linguistic expertise.

When reflecting on their collaborative writing activities, students noted the experiential dimension of working together (T4) as an important benefit. Writing collaboratively was fun, satisfying or even amazing, students wrote:

‘Working in my group was very satisfying and honestly it barely felt like work, challenging enough to be rewarding but not too hard as to be boring.’

The effects positively impacted their language learning, which confirms results of similar studies on collaborative writing in L2 classes (Shehadeh, 2011). However, they went beyond the momentary satisfaction of task completion, as some students reported improved friendship, overcoming initial block in communication, feeling happy and capable to do the work:

‘I felt happy and capable in accomplishing all the requests that were given to us.’
‘We grew stronger as a team and our friendship improved’
‘[it] has put me in situations in which I have to be more sociable’.

Critical views were also present, reflecting diverse beliefs of effective class work and personal preference for individual work rather than collaboration, or for smaller groups:

'I find tiring the idea of teamwork in school projects, aka in things where people have to do it, are forced to'

'I would suggest groups of 2 for a better work distribution'

'It seems easier to do the work alone, and it's the most popular choice among students'

Discussing collaborative writing as a simulation of workplace environments, Bremner (2010) states that, in addition to the practical benefits, such as saving time on tasks, collaboration contributes to understanding and accepting diversity of views and opinions. The constitution of community, acknowledging and working around differences in status, in approaches to writing, in knowledge, or in power are factors that determine how effective the collaboration is, in class or in the workplace. Following Lesikar et al. (2008) on roles team members take during collaborative writing and Dodd (2004) on types of networks and how teams operate, Bremner advocates for setting up for students collaborative writing contexts 'that are rich with the types of interactions, motives and concerns, and even the unpredictability and frustration, that feature in the workplace' (Bremner, 2010, p.130).

RQ2: HOW DO STUDENTS INTERACT WHILE COMPLETING THE COLLABORATIVE ESP WRITING?

The second research question of the present study focuses on interactions and networks formed during collaborative writing activities for ESP learning. Data about these aspects were collected in the surveys via multiple choice questions as well as responses to open-ended questions.

The types of interactions within a group are determined by the group's approach to handling the task and carrying out the necessary work. In the case of my students, their feedback and reflections on learning indicate a compound approach. Most of the answers show an overwhelming preference for dividing the work; *split the work, split the tasks, divided the work, split evenly across the team* were the most commonly used expressions. As for criteria of dividing the work, students mentioned equal amount for each member or division by individual skills or knowledge:

'[...] each doing the same amount of work'

'We divided tasks based on our strengths—some handled writing, while others focused on survey design and data analysis'

'We split the work based on each team member's interests'

'We had a democratic approach to tackling tasks, we discussed about them and about the way to complete them and after that one or more of us started doing the thing'

However, in some cases students felt that tackling the aspect, task or problem together as a group was the most appropriate angle:

'After gathering all the information we needed, we worked together to connect the ideas'

'[we worked] by collaborating each one in the realisation of the project'

All of the students reported that they checked each other's work as well as the final version of their pieces of writing, both for language errors and for clarity of content:

'We sent the file to all the members and checked for mistakes and the corrected them'

'We checked for mistakes if we had time by sending a screenshot on our group chat on WhatsApp'

'We reread everything multiple times, and then discussed if changes needed to be done'

'We made sure to check each other's work for mistakes as well as review the final version thoroughly. Each group member took responsibility for a section we exchanged our sections with one another for review, we put together our work and made the final edits.'

'We worked together on a single computer, and we shared the screen to let everyone in the group to see the document'

'Multiple people checked the work such that if someone missed something the other person could catch it'

'We checked each other's work by rereading everything. Then we discussed the things we considered mistakes in each other's work, and corrected if we agreed that is not correct'

Storch (2013) shows that patterns of interactions students form when co-authoring text are important for the quality of their work and the quality of relations established within the group. Both dimensions contribute to developing workplace skills (Bremner 2010), enhancing learner satisfaction (Watanabe 2008), retention of co-constructed knowledge (Storch 2013), and producing better-quality written texts (Li & Zhu 2017).

The most frequent type of task-handling reported in the present study, 'splitting the task', is closer to what research describes as *cooperative interaction*. Storch (2013) reports four types of dyadic interactions distinguishable in terms of the learners' contribution and control over the task (termed equality), and engagement with each other's contribution (termed mutuality). In interactions among students where equality and mutuality are relatively high, the relationship

is labelled collaborative, while in situations where equality is high, but mutuality is low the pattern is labelled dominant/dominant or cooperative. In her view, what distinguishes collaborative from cooperative interactions is the fact that in the former texts are co-constructed and there is high engagement with the task and among team members, while 'cooperation involves the division of labour between individuals in order to complete the task' (Storch, 2013, p.12).

These differences reflect in the relationships formed, the sense of ownership and responsibility for the work, and the overall quality of the outcomes. The group dynamics impacts learning when collaborative/cooperative patterns of interaction operate in classroom environments, and it impacts professional performance when they operate in the workplace. The students in the present study report a form of cooperative writing when they decide to split the work and produce each a section of the final product. Nevertheless, they also display high engagement with each other and with the work produced when they check the final written piece, when they look for the best option for a word or a phrase and when they negotiate the meaning they co-create. Some of the students' answers were:

'We all shared the parts we worked on and put them together to create the whole text' 'After everyone carefully checked for mistakes in grammar and made sure the ideas made sense, we agreed that it was finished'

'[...] after someone finished writing a paragraph, we would all read it and discuss it'

'Before writing the job ad and the memo, each one of us had prepared a few paragraphs containing the main ideas we needed to cover. After that, we worked together for the final version of the work, paying attention to the possible mistakes that were appearing. Finally, we read again the final version'

While studies such as those by Storch (2009, 2013) argue for the enhanced effectiveness of collaborative writing over cooperative writing for learning L2 and for learning to write, cooperative types of interaction are just as valuable and simulate common practices in the workplace (Ede&Lunsford, 1990; Bremner, 2010). Many workplace tasks involve the production of written texts by multiple authors followed by collaboration of all members of the team in the final stages of the project, interactions that qualify as cooperative, rather than collaborative (Dillenbourg et al., 1996; Leki, 2001). Tan et al. (2010) report that in their study of pair interaction for L2 writing, the cooperative pairs displayed little collective scaffolding, but the data from the present study depict a more complex picture. The students approached the writing tasks both individually and together, as a team, engaged with each other's work, while taking shared responsibility for the final product:

*'At the end of each work, we put everything in a whole, and then I checked if everything is fine'
'We engaged in reviewing each other's work and discussing any errors we encountered'
'We worked together to connect the ideas, doing our best to achieve a result as clear as possible'*

Their perceptions are in line with current research which highlights the value of collaborative writing for knowledge sharing, meaning negotiation, scaffolding of learning, mediation and relationship forming in classroom and workplace contexts (Elola&Oskoz, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

The present study reported student interactions during ESP-related class projects which involved collaborative writing. The feedback and reflection data collected from participating students were used to answer questions about the students' perceptions on learning through collaborative writing and about the nature of interactions during the collaborative activities.

A complex approach to learning ESP became apparent when analyzing the main themes the students' responses revealed. Learning through collaborative writing was viewed from a product- and a process-oriented perspective, with communication and engagement as pillars of successful language learning outcomes. With a sharp critical eye, students identified problematic aspects such as lack of engagement of some students and diverse preferences for grouping. However, being focused on completing the tasks successfully, this did not prevent them from supporting each other. Mediation can be seen in students' attempts to facilitate collaborative interaction (Council of Europe, 2020) even at times when conflicting opinions arose or when lack of linguistic resources were identified (Students wrote: *'we divided tasks based on individual skills, maintained open communication and solved the issues we encountered together'*). Moreover, students mediated their own interaction (Council of Europe, 2020) by deciding to split the tasks and then negotiate the final version of written pieces as products of teamwork. This approach that combines characteristics of cooperative and collaborative writing (two types of interactions identified in dyadic/small group work for L2 learning) is consistent with research into how writing together simulates workplace conditions and contributes to the students' development of real-life skills (Bremner, 2010; Storch, 2013; Li&Zhang, 2023).

Learning ESP through collaborative writing had a positive experiential dimension which contributed to relationships forming (Students wrote: *'we*

improved our friendship') and impacted personal communication issues such as block or preference for different task approach.

Due to its small scale, small sample and mono-source collection of data, the present study can only yield results and insights limited to the context investigated. Aspects that seem to contradict exiting research, such as collective scaffolding presence in cooperative groups (see Tan et al., 2010), should be further pursued by extending the range of data and by performing longitudinal studies of multiple groups working both collaboratively and cooperatively for L2 writing development.

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La médiation linguistique et la terminologie juridique : quelles sont les exigences du marché du travail ? Des connaissances linguistiques, de l'expérience professionnelle ou des compétences clés ?

ANDREEA-MARIA SĂRMAȘIU¹

Résumé : Le marché du travail, y compris le domaine de la traduction juridique, est le point de rencontre entre la demande (des clients qui recherchent des connaissances linguistiques, de l'expérience professionnelle et des compétences clés) et les personnes qui peuvent la satisfaire (les étudiants en traduction et les traducteurs eux-mêmes). Dans ce contexte, il est nécessaire de connaître au moins deux outils qui permettront d'explorer le marché de la traduction juridique : la médiation linguistique et la terminologie juridique. À travers cette étude, l'auteur voudrait montrer que la médiation linguistique et la maîtrise de la terminologie juridique sont des outils de gestion de la traduction juridique, surtout dans un marché du travail en constante évolution. Dans cette perspective, le but de cet article est d'analyser les exigences du marché du travail en ce qui concerne la médiation linguistique et la terminologie juridique. Les questions clés qui se posent sont les suivantes : Comment aborder le marché du travail ? Quelles sont ses exigences ? S'agit-il des connaissances linguistiques approfondies, de l'expérience professionnelle ou des compétences transversales ? Cette recherche essaie de répondre à toutes ces questions, en examinant l'importance des connaissances linguistiques, de l'expérience pratique et des compétences clés dans le contexte de la traduction juridique.

Mots-clé : *médiation linguistique, terminologie juridique, connaissances linguistiques, expérience professionnelle, compétences clés*

INTRODUCTION

Le terme général de la *médiation* est défini comme l'intervention « dans un conflit opposant deux parties afin d'aider ces dernières à conclure un accord » (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001, p. 18). À partir de cette définition, la question qui se pose est la suivante : dans le contexte linguistique ou de l'apprentissage/de l'enseignement des langages spécialisés, quels sont les moyens nécessaires pour

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parvenir à un accord ? Le *Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues* nous offre la solution la plus efficace : « les activités écrites et/ou orales de médiation, [...] par la traduction ou l'interprétariat, le résumé ou le compte rendu [...]. » (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001, p. 18). Donc, tout d'abord, nous pouvons constater que la médiation peut être retrouvée sur le plan linguistique, où celle-ci occupe une place très importante. Ensuite, sous sa forme linguistique, elle est définie comme l'ensemble d'activités orales ou écrites, c'est-à-dire comme un processus qui implique des actions telles que la traduction, l'interprétariat, le résumé, ou encore le compte rendu. Ces activités facilitent la communication entre des individus qui n'ont pas accès direct à un texte ou à une information en raison de barrières linguistiques ou contextuelles (Conseil de l'Europe, 2001, p. 18). Alors, la médiation linguistique encourage l'interaction et l'échange, en créant un lien entre les normes de la langue et la conventionalité culturelle qui pourrait être décrite comme la préservation des éléments normatifs, propres à une culture ou à une situation de communication. Ce lien permettra de surmonter les barrières de compréhension et de créer une connexion entre les locuteurs de langues différentes qui ne pourraient pas, par eux-mêmes, y accéder de manière autonome.

Nous avons déjà mentionné parmi les activités de médiation linguistique proposées la traduction. Toutefois, on pourrait se demander : que se passe-t-il si la traduction devient elle-même un processus ? Quel sera le rôle de la médiation et quel type de médiation sera utilisée dans ce cas ? Premièrement, le rôle de la médiation ne sera pas seulement de transmettre des informations, mais aussi de partager des connaissances linguistiques, en tenant compte des spécificités linguistiques, culturelles et pragmatiques du public cible de la traduction. Donc, l'utilisation de la médiation devient une sorte de *lingua franca*, « le passage d'une langue-culture à une autre » (Aden, 2012, p. 271) :

Language variation and the symbolic power gained through the ability to switch and mix codes are now seen as crucial to the construction of citizens' identities, and to their ability to navigate the semiotics of a global economy.² (Kramsch, 2006, p. 2)

Dans le contexte présenté ci-dessus (la traduction comme processus, et non pas comme activité écrite de médiation) nous pouvons mettre en évidence l'interconnexion qui existe entre la traduction et la médiation elle-même du point

² « La variation linguistique et le pouvoir symbolique acquis grâce à la capacité de changer et de mélanger les codes sont désormais considérés comme essentiels à la construction de l'identité des citoyens et à leur capacité à naviguer dans la sémiotique d'une économie mondiale ». (Notre traduction)

de vue linguistique. Paulo Ronai relevait lui-même cet aspect, en définissant la traduction comme l'action de passer d'une langue à une autre langue (1976, p. 3-4). Il continue cette définition en précisant que, du point de vue étymologique (en latin) :

tranducere c'est prendre quelqu'un par la main vers l'autre côté, vers un autre endroit. Le sujet de ce verbe est le traducteur, l'objet direct, l'auteur de l'original [...] Mais l'image peut être aussi comprise d'une autre manière : le traducteur prend la main du lecteur pour l'emmener vers un support linguistique autre que le sien. (Ronai, 1976, p. 3-4)

Deuxièmement, le rôle de la médiation sera d'encourager le partage d'expérience sur les pratiques professionnelles car le traducteur doit comprendre non seulement le texte source, mais aussi les attentes et les besoins du client, voire du public cible.

Troisièmement, grâce à l'emploi de la médiation dans le processus de traduction, la bonne assimilation des savoir-faire et savoir-être utiles dans le cadre professionnel sera facilitée afin de permettre une véritable compréhension et une appropriation du message par le client et/ou le public cible. Parmi ces compétences, on mentionne la créativité, l'intelligence émotionnelle, la pensée analytique (critique), le jugement et la prise de décision, les compétences de communication interpersonnelle, la diversité et l'intelligence culturelle (Marr, 2019).

En bref, la traduction comme processus demande à la fois l'utilisation de la médiation linguistique et culturelle afin d'assurer la transmission d'un message ; de plus, celle-ci fait appel à l'expérience professionnelle et aux compétences clés du traducteur (le médiateur). En ce qui concerne les compétences les plus importantes d'un traducteur, le réseau des programmes de master européen en traduction (European Master's in Translation, EMT) a publié un référentiel où sont présentées les « compétences », les « aptitudes », les « savoirs » et les « acquis de l'éducation et de la formation » nécessaires dans le secteur de la traduction. Le document définit cinq domaines de compétence majeurs : langue et culture, traduction, technologies, personnel et interpersonnel, prestation de services (EMT, 2022, p. 4). Le premier domaine, *langue et culture*, englobe « tous les savoirs et aptitudes linguistiques, sociolinguistiques, culturels et interculturels, de nature générale ou propre à une langue, qui constituent la base d'une compétence de traduction élevée. » (EMT, 2022, p. 6). Le deuxième domaine, *traduction*, inclut « toutes les compétences stratégiques, méthodologiques et thématiques qui entrent en jeu avant, pendant et après la phase de transfert proprement dite [...] » (EMT, 2022, p. 7). Le troisième domaine, *technologies*, compte « tous les savoirs et aptitudes utilisés pour mettre en

œuvre les technologies de traduction actuelles et futures » (EMT, 2022, p. 9). Le quatrième domaine, *personnel et interpersonnel*, réunit « toutes les aptitudes générales, souvent désignées par l'expression « soft skills », qui augmentent l'adaptabilité et l'employabilité des diplômés » (des futurs traducteurs) (EMT, 2022, p. 10). Le dernier domaine, *prestation de services*, recouvre « toutes les aptitudes liées à la mise en œuvre de la traduction et, plus généralement, aux services linguistiques dans un cadre professionnel » (EMT, 2022, p. 11).

Dans cet article, nous présenterons le rôle de la médiation linguistique et/ou culturelle dans un processus de traduction juridique, mené par les étudiants de 2^e année LMA (Faculté des Lettres, UBB Cluj-Napoca), en insistant sur la médiation appliquée avant, pendant et après l'activité de traduction.

MÉDIATION ET TRADUCTION. DES REMARQUES PRÉLIMINAIRES

Afin d'analyser la traduction, c'est-à-dire son rôle essentiel de faire passer, dans une langue cible, un texte rédigé dans une langue source, nous devons tenir compte de deux acceptions principales : la traductologie pure et la traduction appliquée (Holmes, 2000). D'une part, la traductologie pure signifie décrire les phénomènes de traduction et établir les théories de la traduction (Holmes, 2000) pour pouvoir examiner l'objet (le texte), la fonction et le processus de traduction. D'autre part, la traduction appliquée est orientée vers le processus de traduction, le traducteur (humain), les aides à la traduction (des dictionnaires, des grammaires, des mémoires de traduction et des ressources en ligne) et l'évaluation/la révision de la traduction (Nwachukwu, 2023), plus exactement vers les aspects les plus importants qui constituent la traduction et qui deviennent essentiels dans l'établissement des étapes d'une traduction : AVANT – PENDANT – APRÈS (Sărmașiu, 2024). Donc, la question qui se pose dans ce contexte particulier est : quel est le rôle de la médiation linguistique/culturelle dans l'acte de traduction ?

MÉDIATION ET TRADUCTION : AVANT ? (I)

Pendant le mois de mai 2024, les étudiants de 2^e année LMA ont reçu comme tâche un exercice de traduction dans le cadre d'un cours pratique de traduction spécialisée. L'objet de l'activité de traduction était un contrat de franchise (français-roumain), dans le domaine des cosmétiques, en respectant quelques objectifs primordiaux et quelques demandes particulières. En ce qui concerne les objectifs, les étudiants ont dû (1) livrer une traduction professionnelle, c'est-à-dire respecter

le principe de la fonctionnalité en traduction (Sărmașiu, 2024) ; (2) suivre le format du texte source, autrement dit respecter le principe de la conventionalité en traduction (Sărmașiu, 2024) ; et (3) traduire en utilisant des sources valides, des sites web spécialisés, des dictionnaires et glossaires, des bases de données terminologiques et des textes parallèles, à savoir suivre le principe de l'équivalence en traduction (Sărmașiu, 2024). Les étudiants ont travaillé en trois équipes, chaque équipe étant formée d'un assistant, des traducteurs et des réviseurs. En même temps, le projet a été coordonné par un manager de projet, un responsable DTP et deux réviseurs principaux.

AVANT d'entamer le processus de traduction, la médiation linguistique et/ou culturelle a été appliquée sous la forme d'une *négociation* afin de garantir une transmission fidèle et adaptée du texte source à la langue cible. Toutes les équipes ont suivi les mêmes étapes pour mieux comprendre le texte source et organiser leur travail. De plus, ces étapes peuvent être considérées comme des activités de médiation linguistique et/ou culturelle.

Tout d'abord, les équipes ont fait une analyse approfondie du texte source pour pouvoir transmettre le message dans la langue cible. Cette analyse a inclus une recherche complexe sur : (1) le contexte dans lequel le texte a été produit, (2) l'objectif du texte, (3) le public auquel ce texte spécialisé s'adresse, (4) les éventuelles spécificités culturelles, (5) les éléments terminologiques spécialisés.

La deuxième étape a été définie par une recherche documentaire du point de vue de la terminologie spécialisée utilisée afin d'anticiper et de surmonter les difficultés linguistiques et culturelles. Les équipes ont réalisé des listes d'ouvrages, d'articles, de bases de données terminologiques, de contacts d'experts dans le domaine juridique.

La troisième étape a été représentée par la constitution d'un glossaire de termes spécifiques pour le domaine juridique afin de faciliter la cohérence du texte traduit et pour s'assurer que les termes spécialisés sont traduits de manière homogène et structurée tout au long du processus de traduction, pour simplifier considérablement la communication professionnelle.

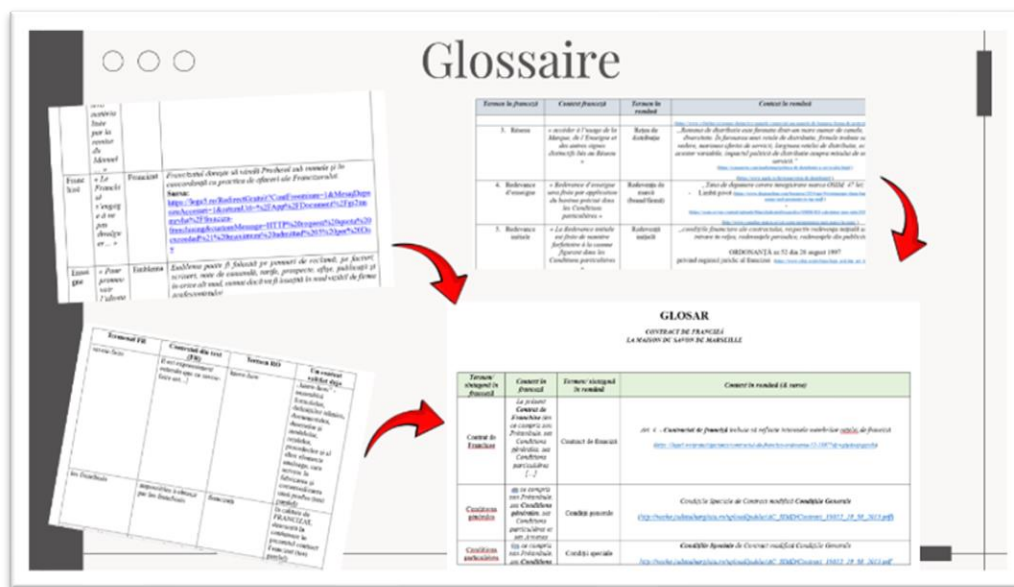


Image 1. Des captures d'écran du glossaire réalisé par les étudiants de 2^e année LMA
Source : L'archive de l'auteur

Pendant la quatrième étape, les étudiants ont identifié les problèmes de traduction, en suivant une classification théorique : des problèmes pragmatiques, des problèmes linguistiques/terminologiques, des problèmes culturels et des problèmes spécifiques au texte à traduire (Nord, 1991). Cette identification a été très importante parce que la réflexion approfondie sur les équivalences fonctionnelles entre les deux langages et cultures juridiques aide les étudiants à choisir les stratégies adaptées au contexte de leur traduction.

Souhaitant offrir une traduction de qualité, la dernière étape a été la clarification des consignes et des attentes du client. En ce qui concerne la compréhension et l'appropriation des consignes, une bonne organisation est essentielle avant de commencer la traduction. Les étudiants ont planifié les étapes de leur travail : décomposition du texte en sections traduisibles, gestion du temps, révision, validation ou relecture par des experts. Pour répondre aux attentes du client, les étudiants ont maintenu un contact permanent avec celui-ci et ils ont validé ensemble le but de la traduction et le contexte d'utilisation de cette traduction, le registre de langue, le format du texte cible afin de pouvoir s'orienter dans leurs choix de traduction et d'éviter les incompréhensions.

Ce que nous pouvons remarquer c'est la présence de la médiation sous plusieurs formes dans les étapes préparatoires du projet de traduction. Tout d'abord, la médiation utilisée comme activité linguistique et/ou culturelle pour

préparer et anticiper les étapes à suivre pendant le processus de traduction. Ensuite, la médiation utilisée comme moyen de négociation entre les membres des équipes, mais aussi entre les équipes et les coordonnateurs du projet. En outre, la médiation utilisée comme lien entre les étudiants et le client.

MÉDIATION ET TRADUCTION : PENDANT ? (II)

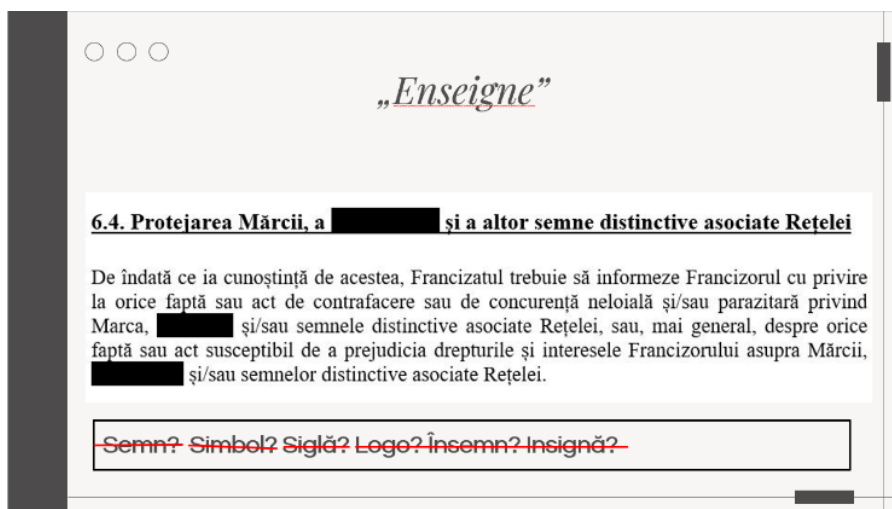
Après avoir parcouru les étapes préparatoires de la traduction, les étudiants ont démarré le processus de transposition du texte juridique de la langue française à la langue roumaine, grâce à leurs compétences linguistiques, culturelles et analytiques approfondies. Cette fois-là, PENDANT la traduction, la médiation linguistique et/ou culturelle s'est retrouvée sous la forme d'une *conversation* constante ; et cela parce que les étudiants ont suivi les étapes d'un processus de traduction juridique.

Premièrement, après la décomposition du texte en sections traduisibles, chaque membre des équipes a repris, de manière individuelle, la lecture approfondie du texte source pour comprendre l'idée principale, les nuances, ainsi que les intentions de l'auteur. À ce stade, les étudiants ont également dû repérer les passages complexes ou ambigus.

Deuxièmement, chaque traducteur a dû transposer le sens des mots. S'agissant d'un texte juridique, ils ont eu la tâche de rendre le message original dans la langue roumaine en s'assurant que l'intention, le ton et les nuances terminologiques sont préservés. À la fin, les étudiants ont déclaré que cette étape-là a demandé la reformulation des phrases, de la syntaxe, des expressions pour que celles-ci soient compréhensibles et naturelles dans la langue cible.

Troisièmement, lorsque le texte comportait des termes juridiques, les étudiants ont vérifié de manière minutieuse les sens des concepts pour conserver la précision juridique/terminologique tout en rendant le texte accessible au public cible. Un terme qui leur a posé problèmes a été le mot *enseigne*. Alors, les étudiants ont utilisé la médiation comme négociation et la médiation linguistique comme activité terminologique ; ils ont trouvé plusieurs solutions (*semn ? simbol ? siglă ? logo ? însemn ? insignă ?*) ; après une activité de documentation et de recherche terminologique, ils ont choisi la meilleure solution : *emblemă*. De plus, ils ont rencontré d'autres termes/structures problématiques en ayant besoin de réfléchir et de trouver les meilleures stratégies pour offrir les solutions correctes. Par exemple, *boutique* traduit par *magazin* ou *butic* ; *redevance* traduit par *taxă* ou *redevență* ; *le chiffre d'affaires hors taxes* traduit par *cifra de afaceri* ou *cifra de afaceri (fără taxe)* ; *précisées à*

l'Article traduit par menționate în art. ou menționate la art. ; prévue à traduit par conform art. ou în temeiul art.



*Image 2. Des termes problématiques identifiés PENDANT le processus de traduction juridique.
Source : L'archive de l'auteur*

Ce processus de traduction juridique a eu une dimension culturelle et terminologique. Les étudiants ont dû constamment s'adapter aux particularités linguistiques et culturelles de la langue roumaine, mais aussi du droit roumain. Ils ont également été obligés à respecter les normes juridiques roumaines, les sensibilités culturelles et le registre linguistique afin que le texte soit pertinent et compréhensible dans le contexte professionnel demandé.

Tout au long du processus de traduction juridique, les étudiants qui jouaient le rôle des traducteurs ont procédé à des relectures régulières pour identifier les éventuelles erreurs et s'assurer que les phrases sont bien formulées, que le texte est fluide, et que les idées sont transmises de manière claire.

En outre, les étudiants ont dû respecter des contraintes spécifiques liées au format du texte reçu. Un exemple concluant sera *l'utilisation des majuscules ou des minuscules* pour marquer des termes stipulés dans le contrat ou définis dans le vocabulaire réalisé à la fin du contrat.

En conclusion, PENDANT le processus de traduction juridique, la médiation a joué un rôle très important, défini par la conversation constante entre les traducteurs, le choix attentif des notions, l'adaptation culturelle et normative, la cohérence. Le but principal de cette médiation a été la préparation du texte traduit pour la dernière étape : APRÈS la traduction.

MÉDIATION ET TRADUCTION : APRÈS ? (III)

APRÈS le processus de traduction, d'autres décisions essentielles sont nécessaires pour s'assurer que la forme finale du texte est fidèle au texte source et adaptée à la culture et à la langue cible. Ces étapes post-traduction garantissent la qualité et la cohérence du travail.

Tout d'abord, il y a eu la révision linguistique et stylistique. Les étudiants qui ont eu le rôle des réviseurs ont fait la relecture du texte traduit pour corriger les erreurs linguistiques (grammaire, orthographe, ponctuation) et pour améliorer le style (uniformité terminologique et syntaxique : les phrases sont bien formulées, la syntaxe est correcte, le texte est agréable à lire dans la langue roumaine).

Cette révision linguistique et stylistique a été accompagnée par une médiation linguistique et culturelle menée par l'équipe des réviseurs et les équipes des traducteurs, mais aussi par le manager du projet et son assistante et l'équipe des réviseurs.

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8.2. Approvisionnement	

Image 3. La révision linguistique et stylistique

Source : L'archive de l'auteur

APRÈS cette étape de révision linguistique et stylistique, le manager du projet et son assistante ont eu la tâche de vérifier la fidélité de la traduction, en comparant à nouveau le texte traduit avec le texte source. Cette étape de vérification de la fidélité de la traduction permet de s'assurer que tous les éléments du texte source ont été traduits correctement et que rien n'a été omis ou modifié de manière inappropriée. Parfois, une réinterprétation ou une reformulation peut entraîner des erreurs subtiles dans la transmission du sens.

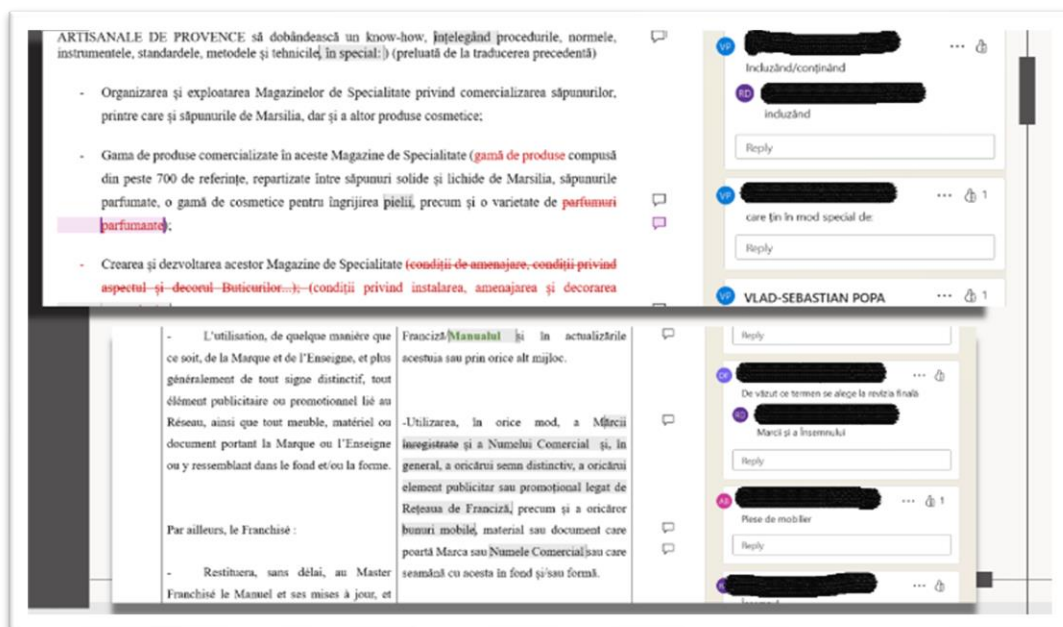


Image 4. La comparaison du texte traduit avec le texte source

Source : L'archive de l'auteur

Comme le texte reçu était un texte juridique, il était important de s'assurer que la terminologie utilisée était homogène et structurée tout au long du texte. Donc, la responsable DTP (l'assistante du manager du projet) a dû revoir le glossaire utilisé et confirmer que tous les termes juridiques sont bien adaptés au contexte particulier de la langue et de la culture roumaine. De plus, le texte comportait des normes spécifiques, alors l'étudiante a dû s'assurer que celles-ci ont été correctement adaptées. En outre, la vérification de la mise en forme a été très importante : la disposition du texte, des paragraphes, des titres. Une mise en forme incorrecte ou négligée aurait pu donner une impression de travail non professionnel, même si la traduction était de bonne qualité.

La dernière partie APRÈS la traduction a été dédiée à la consultation d'un expert. Dans le cas des textes spécialisés, notamment juridiques, il est très utile d'analyser la traduction avec un expert. Cet expert, qui pourrait être un spécialiste, un professionnel, mais aussi un autre traducteur ou réviseur, pourrait identifier des erreurs mineures ou suggérer des améliorations à l'égard de la terminologie ou du style.

Pour intégrer la médiation linguistique et/ou culturelle, nous avons organisé un atelier de traduction spécialisé où nous avons invité des juristes et d'autres intervenants. Grâce à cet atelier, les étudiants ont eu la possibilité de *négocier*

(d'expliquer et de soutenir par des arguments valides leurs choix), tout en recevant des conseils de la part des experts dans le domaine.



Image 5. Le poster de l'atelier de traduction spécialisée organisé

Source : L'archive de l'auteur

En conclusion, APRÈS la traduction, la médiation linguistique et/ou culturelle est indispensable pour garantir une traduction de qualité. Elle permet non seulement de vérifier la fluidité et la fidélité du texte traduit, mais aussi de s'assurer que la version finale est professionnelle et adaptée aux besoins du client.

CONCLUSIONS

Dans cet article, nous avons pu constater que la médiation, qu'elle soit linguistique ou culturelle, générale ou spécifique, joue un rôle fondamental dans la traduction appliquée ou dans le processus de traduction spécialisée. Le rôle de cette médiation est visible, tout d'abord, dans l'activité du traducteur qui ne se contente pas de transposer des mots d'une langue à une autre, mais il devient un véritable intermédiaire entre deux mondes culturels et linguistiques.

Premièrement, la médiation est liée au processus de traduction grâce aux étapes préparatoires. Comme les traducteurs doivent surmonter les barrières linguistiques et culturelles qui peuvent entraver la communication, ils veillent à ce que le texte traduit soit non seulement compréhensible, mais également cohérent et adapté au public cible, à travers quelques activités spécifiques : l'analyse approfondie du texte source ; la recherche documentaire du point de vue de la terminologie spécialisée ; la constitution d'un glossaire ; l'identification des problèmes de traduction ; la clarification des consignes et des attentes du client.

Deuxièmement, la médiation apparaît PENDANT le processus de traduction parce qu'à travers la médiation, les traducteurs peuvent reformuler, ajuster et parfois réinterpréter certains éléments du texte source pour en garantir l'intelligibilité dans la langue cible. On y cite la décomposition du texte en sections traduisibles ; la transposition du sens des mots ; la préservation de l'uniformité terminologique et de la précision juridique/terminologique ; l'adaptation aux particularités linguistiques et culturelles de la langue cible, tout en tenant compte des normes, des coutumes, des traditions ; le respect des contraintes spécifiques liées au format du texte.

Troisièmement, le rapport entre la médiation et la traduction est visible également APRÈS le processus de traduction, grâce à la révision linguistique et stylistique, et notamment grâce à l'opportunité de travailler avec des experts. Toute cette collaboration permet donc de garantir une communication efficace et professionnelle entre les différents acteurs du secteur traductologique et d'établir des ponts entre les langues et les cultures, de promouvoir la compréhension globale et d'encourager le dialogue permanent entre le milieu éducationnel et le milieu business.

En conclusion, la médiation, étroitement liée à la traduction, joue un rôle primordial dans les échanges des connaissances linguistiques, des expériences professionnelles et des compétences clés AVANT-PENDANT-APRÈS le processus de traduction, étant un levier essentiel qui encourage une communication efficace et permanente entre les étudiants en traduction et leurs (possibles) futurs employeurs.

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Medierea și logica documentării în didactica limbilor-culturi

GROSU MARIA¹

Rezumat: Studiul propune ca teză ideea conform căreia logica documentării, caracteristică abordării acționale în didactica limbilor-culturi, spre deosebire de logica suportului, caracteristică abordării comunicative, oferă contextul favorabil pentru mediere. Spre deosebire de logica suportului, care propune un text suport pentru toți cursanții din grupul de lucru, logica documentării propune o serie de surse de documentare, dintre care fiecare cursant alege un document, în funcție de interesele personale și de preferințe, astfel că în etapa de interacțiune și mediere, fiecare cursant aduce propriile informații diferite de ale celorlalți cursanți. Scenariile didactice pe care le vom descrie au la bază logica documentării și propun ca surse de documentare buletine informative difuzate la radio. Prin acest studiu se va demonstra importanța logicii documentării pentru medierea intralingvistică și interculturală, precum și beneficiile majore pe care le aduc abordarea acțională, logica documentării și medierea, în didactica limbilor-culturi – creșterea gradului de implicare a studenților, schimburi lingvistice și culturale autentice care conduc la procese transformativă, mai mult decât formative, ipostaza de mediatori a cursanților. Astfel, studiul va evidenția necesitatea desprinderii de logica suportului, în favoarea logicii documentării, mai bine pliată pe nevoile de învățare ale cursanților din secolul al XXI-lea.

Cuvinte-cheie: *mediere, politici lingvistice, logica documentării, abordare acțională, didactica proiectului*

INTRODUCERE

Studiul propune ca teză ideea conform căreia logica documentării, caracteristică abordării acționale în didactica limbilor-culturi, spre deosebire de logica suportului, caracteristică abordării comunicative, oferă contextul favorabil pentru mediere. Spre deosebire de logica suportului, care propune un text suport pentru toți cursanții din grupul de lucru, logica documentării propune o întreagă serie de surse de documentare, de unde cursanții aleg un document, în funcție de interesele personale și de preferințe, astfel că în etapa de interacțiune și mediere, fiecare cursant aduce propriile informații, diferite de cele ale celorlalți cursanți.

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După prezentarea premiselor teoretice din jurul conceptelor din titlu, vom descrie scenarii didactice în care studenții sunt implicați în activități de receptare (scrisă și orală), producere (scrisă și orală), dar mai ales de mediere și de interacțiune. Scenariile didactice pe care le vom descrie și care au la bază logica documentării, propun ca surse de documentare buletine informative difuzate la radio, în limba română. Cursanții sunt reprezentați de studenți internaționali de la Universitatea de Medicină și Farmacie „Iuliu Hațieganu”, care studiază limba română ca limbă străină, în primii doi sau trei ani de studiu, câte două sau trei ore pe săptămână, în funcție de facultatea la care sunt înscriși. Nivelul de referință de la care s-a început dezvoltarea activităților de mediere, pornind de la actualitățile difuzate la radio, este A2+. La început, nivelul de dificultate a fost foarte mare pentru studenți, fiind necesară apelarea la forma transcrisă a știrilor difuzate și la eliminarea unor aspecte ale conținutului, prin mediere intralingvistică (studenților cerându-li-se să identifice subiectul abordat și câteva date contextuale – când, unde, de ce). Pe parcurs însă, prin repetarea săptămânală a acestei activități, studenții au progresat foarte mult în receptarea mesajului oral, astfel că la finalul anului universitar, în fișele de autoevaluare, remarcabil de mulți studenți au menționat activitățile legate de știrile difuzate la radio ca fiind cele mai utile în progresul lor în limba română.

Prin acest studiu se va demonstra importanța logicii documentării pentru medierea intralingvistică și interculturală, precum și beneficiile majore pe care le aduc abordarea acțională, logica documentării și medierea, în didactica limbilor-culturi – creșterea gradului de implicare a studenților, schimburi lingvistice și culturale autentice care conduc la procese transformativă, mai mult decât formative; ipostaza de mediator a cursanților. Astfel, studiul va evidenția necesitatea desprinderii de logica suportului, în favoarea logicii documentării, mai bine pliată pe nevoile de învățare ale cursanților din secolul al XXI-lea.

MEDIEREA ȘI POLITICILE LINGVISTICE EUROPENE

Vom arăta în acest studiu că activitatea de mediere, mai precis de transmitere și co-construcție a informației, reprezintă una dintre cele mai prolifiche modalități și strategii de comunicare în experiențele de învățare-utilizare a unei limbi-culturi, din punctul de vedere al beneficiilor, atât în planul competențelor lingvistice, cât și în planul competențelor generale (*savoir, savoir-faire, savoir-être, savoir-apprendre*). De asemenea, vom argumenta faptul că logica documentării, spre deosebire de logica suportului, permite activități de mediere intralingvistică, interpersonală și interculturală. Totodată, vom ilustra faptul că medierea intralingvistică, interpersonală

și interculturală se poate realiza în mod foarte productiv, prin adoptarea viziunii acționale în didactica limbilor-culturi și implicit prin implementarea logicii documentării, în experiențele de predare-învățare-utilizare a unei limbi-culturi.

Cadrul European Comun de Referință pentru Limbi (CECRL), publicat în 2001 și aprofundat prin Volumele Complementare, în 2012 și în 2018, vine cu un model holistic, integraționist și social de învățare și de utilizare a limbilor și cu conceptul de plurilingvism. Înainte de publicarea CECRL (2001), abordarea comună de învățare a limbilor era bazată pe viziunea carteziană, lineară, ilustrată prin disecția utilizării limbilor, după modelul lui Lado (Lado, 1961), în patru competențe (citire, vorbire, scriere, ascultare), trei elemente (gramatică, vocabular, pronunție), toate integrate în cunoștințe culturale statice. În acest model, cursantul e considerat locutor / auditor care se angajează să producă și să primească un cod. Codul primit trebuie să fie cât mai precis posibil și similar cu codul standardizat utilizat de vorbitorul nativ idealizat. Progresul, în această paradigmă, înseamnă atingerea nivelului lingvistic al vorbitorul nativ, în modul de interpretare și de producere a codului. Premisele teoretice ale CECRL se opun viziunii tradiționale și lineare care a dominat lingvistica structurală în anii 1960, ilustrată, în didactica limbilor străine de modelul lui Lado. Astfel, CECRL propune, în locul celor patru competențe de comunicare (receptare scris și orală, producere scrisă și orală), patru moduri de comunicare (receptare, producere, interacțiune și mediere), subliniind faptul că actorul social mobilizează toate competențe sale (generale și lingvistice în realizarea unei sarcini) și ameliorează aceste competențe și strategii în timpul experienței de învățare-utilizare a limbii.

Figure 1 – Structure du schéma descriptif du CECR²⁸

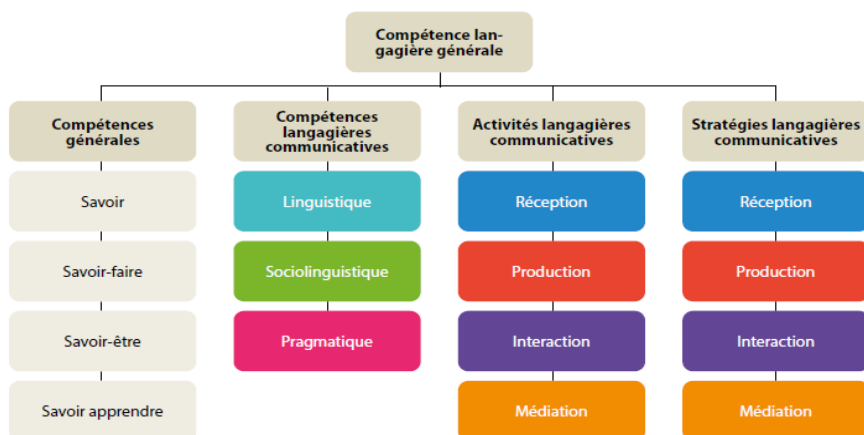


Figura 1. Schema descriptivă a CECLR

Sursa: CECRL, 2021, 33

Pe pagina oficială a Consiliului Europei (<https://www.coe.int/fr/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/mediation>), unde se explicitează cadrul teoretic al CECRL, cursanții sunt definiți în ipostaza de actori sociali, fiind implicați în activități de comunicare, receptare, producere, interacțiune și mediere, activități ce au loc alternativ. Dacă interacțiunea pune accentul pe utilizarea socială a limbii, medierea înglobează și depășește această utilizare, concentrându-se pe crearea de sens și / sau permițând comunicarea dincolo de barierele lingvistice și culturale. Când cursanții / actorii sociali se angajează în activități de mediere, creează spațiul și condițiile pentru a comunica, a învăța, a co-construi un sens nou, a colabora pentru a da sens unui text sau pentru a transmite idei și informații altcuiva. Medierea se poate realiza între mai multe limbi dar și în interiorul aceleiași limbi, de unde și beneficiile medierii în experiența de predare-învățare-utilizare a unui limbi-culturi.

Pe pagina oficială a CECLR (<https://rm.coe.int/les-concepts-cles-mediation/1680a86969>), se prezintă conceptele extrem de novatoare în epocă chiar și pentru specialiștii din domeniul didacticii limbilor străine. Dintre conceptele pe care le vom enumera mai jos, primele au fost implementate și de abordarea comunicativă, deja cu tradiție în didactica limbilor străine, în 2001. În schimb, ultimele au avut nevoie de timp pentru teoretizare și dezvoltare în practică. Conceptele promovate de CECLR în 2001 și aprofundate ulterior în Volumele Complementare din 2018 și din 2021, sunt:

- Definirea nevoilor de învățare din punctul de vedere al utilizatorului;
- Abordarea axată pe capacitatea de a face, mai mult decât pe erorile pe care le face cursantul, în definirea nivelului de referință a cursantului;
- Definirea nevoilor cu ajutorul descriptorilor „eu pot”, de la care se definesc obiectivele, activitățile și conținuturile cursurilor;
- Autoevaluarea și autonomia cursantului;
- Trecerea de la patru competențe, la patru moduri de comunicare (receptare, producere, interacțiune și mediere);
- Conceptul de actor social, pentru utilizator / cursant;
- Conceptul de mediere;
- Abordarea acțională;
- Plurilingvismul.

Documentul video postat pe site-ul oficial al Consiliului Europei, *La médiation et l'apprenant comme acteur social plurilingue*, prezentat în 2022 de Enrica Piccardo, conține ideea conform căreia medierea necesită o nouă abordare, abordarea acțională. Exemple de mediere în abordare acțională sunt:

- căutarea de informații și înțelegerea sensului (mediere pentru sine);
- explicarea unui text sau a conceptelor dintr-un text;
- construirea sensului;
- crearea de obiecte (artefacte).

Didacticiana canadiană subliniază relația dintre mediere și plurilingvism, lucru care răstoarnă mitul purității limbilor și a culturilor. De asemenea, se subliniază faptul că în activitățile de mediere, diferența aduce plusvaloare. Demersurile didactice la care ne vom referi, care au la bază actualități difuzate la radio, se înscriu în viziunea acțională a didacticii limbilor-culturi, promovează plurilingvismul și dezvoltă autonomia cursantului, precum și competențele de autoevaluare. Așadar, experiențele didactice în care cursanții au ascultat buletine informative difuzate la radio, structurate în etapa de documentare, de interacțiune și de mediere, precum și de autoevaluare, sunt forme de implementare ale ultimelor șase noțiuni novatoare propuse de CECRL în 2001 și pentru care s-au propus, în următoarele decenii, teoretizări necesare implementării.

Scenariile didactice pe care le vom descrie detaliat în ultima parte a studiului, subscriu pedagogiei proiectului, viziune pedagogică aflată în congruență cu abordarea acțională. Proiectul major este informarea despre actualitățile la nivel local, național și internațional, precum și ilustrarea filtrelor socio-culturale ale cursanților, prin care aceste informații sunt interpretate. În felul acesta, informarea propriu-zisă este mult depășită de acțiuni de intercunoaștere, precum și de acțiuni de schimbare a unor puncte de vedere / valori / atitudini, în raport cu problematicile abordate în buletinele informative. Totodată, cursanții sunt actori sociali care se interesează despre actualitatea din lume, selectează informațiile relevante pentru ei la nivel personal, le sintetizează și le transmit în mod responsabil, însă nu în mod neutru, ci în mod mediat, filtrul de mediere fiind contextul socio-cultural și personal în care cursantul care mediază s-a format. Activitățile de mediere au rolul de a face mai vizibile aceste filtre de mediere, atât ca procese de autocunoaștere, cât și ca procese de intrecunoaștere. Interacțiunea autentică dintre cursanți, pornind de la buletinele informative ascultate, îi conduce la valorificarea diferențelor personale, culturale, dar și lingvistice. Plurilingvismul este un concept implementat în aceste scenarii didactice, în mai multe feluri: în înțelegerea documentelor autentice în limba română, cursanții fac apel la întregul lor repertoriu lingvistic, căutând să lege informațiile noi de cele familiare; după sintetizarea informațiilor ascultate, cursanții caută informații similare în propriile spații culturale, fie utilizând Chat GPT (în limba română sau în altă limbă), fie căutând pe internet informații despre spațiile lor culturale, în oricare dintre limbile pe care le utilizează. Astfel, scenariile

didactice pe care le vom descrie mai jos au ca principal beneficiu medierea intralingvistică, intrelingvistică, interculturală, interpersoanlă și uneori intrapersonală (procese transformative – schimbarea valorilor / atitudinilor / opiniilor referitoare la o problemă abordată), însă pilonii pe care se poate implementa medierea sunt abordarea acțională și plurilingvismul. Studiul nostru va arăta că medierea se poate implementa cu maximum de beneficii, în logica documentării, corespunzătoare abordării acționale.

Plurilingvismul e prezentat în CECRL ca mijloc de a lupta împotriva manifestărilor intoleranței (Aden, 2012, p. 271). Aden ilustrează faptul că medierea este fructul relației strânse între filosofia umanistă, imaginarul democratic și etica neoliberală a piețelor, iar emergența conceptului de mediere vine mână în mână cu promovarea politicilor actuale europene. Medierea este conceptul promițător pentru amenințarea stabilității europene și a bunei funcționări a democrației. Reuniunile șefilor de stat din Europa au definit xenofobia și ultranaționalismul ca amenințări la stabilitatea europeană, în 1993, urmând ca la ulterioara reuniune a șefilor de stat, cetățenia democratică să devină obiectiv educativ prioritar, prin promovarea modelelor de predare a limbilor străine care întăresc independența gândirii, a judecării și a acțiunii, combinate cu responsabilitate (CECLR, 2021, p. 10) (Aden, 2012, p. 271).

Așadar, politica și cultura se combină pe scena învățării limbilor, iar noțiunea de mediere lingvistică și culturală este plasată la intersecția domeniilor sociale – economie, politică, cultură, domeniul informațional și e asociată plurilingvismului, mai mult decât didacticii limbilor (Aden, 2012, p. 271).

MEDIEREA – DEFINIREA CONCEPTULUI

O definiție cuprinzătoare a medierii este dată de Daniel Coste și Marisa Cavalli: prin mediere se desemnează toate dispozitivele, intervențiile care, acționând într-un context social, reduc distanța dintre doi (sau mai mulți) poli diferiți, aflați în tensiune.

Polii pot fi:

- actori sociali – unul are forme și tipuri de alteritate necunoscute de celălalt: cunoștințe noi, culturi diferite, valori străine;
- actori sociali, grupuri de actori sociali, instituții – în tensiune sau în căutarea unui contact. Contactele de mediere se pot stabili astfel: actor – actor, actor – grup, actor – instituție, grup – grup, grup – instituție, instituție – instituție (Coste & Cavalli, 2015, p. 28).

Conceptul de mediere, în didactica limbilor-culturi, implică schema următoare:



Medierea este procesul care aduce față în față doi poli, între care mediatorul face o legătură prin procesul de mediere și transformă polul A într-o variantă accesibilă pentru polul B. Acești poli pot fi reprezentați de două texte, două persoane, două culturi. La modul sintetic, activități și strategii de mediere pot fi:

- rezumarea textului A prin producerea textului B;
- reformularea mesajului spus de persoana A, pentru ca acesta să fie înțeles de persoana B;
- prezentarea unui aspect de către un *insider* al culturii A, pentru un *outsider*, respectiv pentru un *insider* al altei culturi, B.

Pentru a ilustra relația inseparabilă între *mediere* și *abordarea acțională*, vom enumera câteva puncte comune între cele două concepte. Procesul de mediere conține *in nuce* toate activitățile lingvistice de comunicare corespunzătoare competenței lingvistice generale, evidențiate mai sus, în Figura 1: receptare (receptarea mesajului din polul A), producere (reformularea mesajului, pentru destinatarul din polul B) și interacțiune (orală, scrisă, directă sau virtuală) între cei doi poli. Se știe că abordarea comunicativă promova separarea activităților de comunicare în patru secțiuni (receptarea mesajului oral, receptarea mesajului scris, producerea mesajului oral, producerea mesajului scris) (Piccardo, 2012, p. 287). În schimb, viziunea integratoare este definitorie pentru abordarea acțională: spre deosebire de abordarea comunicativă care are o logică separatistă a activităților de comunicare, abordarea acțională are o logică integrativă: comunicarea e în serviciul acțiunii, iar activitățile lingvistice sunt integrate pentru a realiza o sarcină (Bourguignon, 2012, p. 58). Această abordare integratoare conduce la un grad mai mare de autenticitate a interacțiunii în cadrul scenariilor didactice, autenticitatea fiind unul dintre principiile de bază ale abordării acționale (Bourguignon, 2012, p. 61). Principiile acționale în procesul de predare, învățare și evaluare presupun o similaritate crescută între acțiunile specifice procesului de învățare și acțiunile specifice vieții din afara cadrului educațional. În abordarea acțională, cursantul este definit ca actor social, utilizator al limbii în situații autentice, care depășesc componenta lingvistică a acțiunii sociale, integrând competențele generale ale cursantului-utilizator – *savoir*, *savoir-faire*, *savoir-être*, *savoir apprendre*. Obiectivul

învățării și al evaluării nu mai este doar cunoașterea limbii și competența lingvistică, ci acțiunea socială, prin performarea competenței comunicative, dar și a competenței generale (Bourguignon, 2012, p. 61). Plurilingvismul și pluriculturalitatea sunt obiective majore ale politicilor europene, iar deschiderile pe care le oferă paradigma acțională și implicit medierea, susțin principiile democratice, într-o societate europeană multilingvă, formată din indivizi cu competențe plurilingve și pluriculturale.

Dacă în varianta din 1998 a CECLR, medierea era definită în termeni de *interpretare* (traducere a discursului oral) și *traducere* (traducere a textului scris) (Piccardo, 2012, p. 288), în varianta din 2001, medierea e asociată cu traducerea și cu interpretariatul, dar primește noi valențe, prin includerea ei în situații nonformale (traducere și interpretare pentru prieteni, familie, clienți, vizitatori străini, în situații cotidiene, care implică negocieri). Volumele complementare din 2018 și din 2021 oferă noi deschideri spre oportunitățile pe care le aduce medierea. Aceasta nu mai este definită doar ca o traducere de la o limbă la alta, ci și în interiorul aceleiași limbi (Piccardo, 2012, p. 290).

În accepțiunea actuală, cea promovată de *Volumul complementar al CECLR*, publicat în 2021, medierea e clasificată în trei categorii:

- *Medierea între texte*: transmiterea informațiilor specifice dintr-un text, explicarea informațiilor dintr-un text, traducerea unui text scris, luarea de notițe la conferințe, seminarii, reuniuni, exprimarea unei reacții personale în raport cu un text creativ, analiza critică a unui text etc.;
- *Medierea între concepte*: facilitarea cooperării între interlocutori, cooperarea pentru construirea sensului, gestionarea interacțiunilor, suscitarea unui discurs conceptual etc.;
- *Medierea comunicării*: stabilirea unui spațiu pluricultural, facilitarea comunicării în situații delicate și de dezacord, asumarea rolului de intermediar în situații informale (între prieteni, între colegi) etc. (CECLR, 2021, p. 97-122).

Enrica Piccardo propune o redefinire a categoriilor medierii, argumentând cristalizarea a trei tipuri de mediere, a trei dimensiuni ale medierii, care sunt legate între ele, în mod inseparabil (Piccardo, 2012, p. 290-291):

- *Medierea lingvistică*
 - o dimensiunea interlingvistică – traducere și interpretariat;
 - o dimensiunea intralingvistică – rezumarea unui text în interiorul aceleiași limbi, respectiv transformarea textelor sub diferite forme;

- *Medierea culturală* – trecerea de la o cultură la alta, punerea în contact a diferitelor culturi umane, sociale și profesionale, dar și legătura între diferite stiluri, genuri textuale în interiorul aceleiași limbi;
- *Medierea socială* – locutorul adoptă ipostaza de intermediar între diferiți interlocutori, situație des întâlnită în activitățile cotidiene; această activitate implică facilitarea comunicării, reformularea unui text (scris sau oral), reconstruirea sensului dintr-un mesaj și implicit adaptarea la destinatarul mesajului.

Așadar, acțiunea definitorie pentru mediere este reformularea diferitelor texte (în accepțiunea largă, incluzând concepte, intervenții în interacțiuni comunicative etc.) cu scopul de a facilita comunicarea. Însă medierea implică, în mod indispensabil, *reconstruirea sensului*, ceea ce îmbogățește acest concept cu oportunități mari de dezvoltare în didactica limbilor-culturi (Piccardo, 2012, p. 291).

Daniel Coste propune o altă clasificare a medierii:

- a. *Medierea cognitivă* – facilitează accesul la informații și la cunoștințe;
- b. *Medierea relațională* – contribuie la interacțiune, la calitatea schimburilor și la rezolvarea conflictelor (Coste, 2018, p. 9).

Toate aceste clasificări ale conceptului de mediere pun față în față doi poli distanți și în tensiune (Coste, 2018, p. 9), pe care procesul de mediere îi apropie și îi detensionează sau îi ajută să înțeleagă diferențele dintre ei (Coste & Cavalli, 2015, p. 66).

LOGICA DOCUMENTARII

Vom prezenta cele cinci logici documentare din istoria didacticii limbilor-culturi, pe care le Christian Puren le pune în relație cu diferite paradigme metodologice care s-au dezvoltat, de-a lungul timpului, în domeniul didacticii limbilor străine. Ne orientăm atenția asupra ultimelor două mari paradigme din istoria didacticii limbilor-culturi, paradigma comunicativă și paradigma acțională, prezentate mai pe larg în lucrări anterioare (Grosu, 2019, 2020). Christian Puren identifică cinci modele de documentare, conturate de-a lungul timpului, corespunzătoare diferitelor viziuni metodologice din didactica limbilor străine:

1. Logica literară în didactica limbilor străine se impune în perioada în care textele literare sunt utilizate prioritar, în activitățile de predare. Operele literare sunt alese și studiate ca fiind reprezentative pentru un autor, o operă, o perioadă, o mișcare literară. Documentul literar a avut un rol preponderant în predarea limbilor străine în Franța, între 1920 și 1960 (Puren, 2020, p. 4).

2. Logica documentului e caracteristică aceleiași perioade în Franța, în predarea limbilor străine, combinând metodele directă, activă și orală, în acest caz, pe lângă textele literare, se utilizează documentul autentic. Dosarele temetice de civilizație conțin documente autentice care au ca obiectiv mobilizarea cunoștințelor lingvistice și culturale ale elevilor, precum și îmbogățirea acestor cunoștințe (Puren, 2020, p. 5-6).
3. Logica suport e proprie abordării comunicative, textul fiind pus, prioritar, în serviciul unei activități lingvistice. Când sunt autentice, documentele sunt, în general, nonlinterare, utilizate în manieră parțială, pentru a repera, punctual, elemente de gramatică, de lexic sau pentru înțelegerea textului scris. În marea majoritate a manualelor comunicative, unitățile didactice, finalizate cu propuneri de simulări de situații de comunicare, se prelungesc cu un ansamblu de documente culturale, uneori scurte extrase literare, care reprezintă pretexte pentru schimburi imediate între elevi, în clasă, ca declanșatoare ale interacțiunilor comunicative (Puren, 2020, p. 10).
4. Logica documentării e modelul în care textele pe care le accesează studenții fac parte dintr-un dosar documentar propus cursanților și eventual, completat de ei, documente pe care cursanții le consultă în scopul realizării unei sarcini finale, a unui mini-proiect. Logica documentării nu mai face apel la competența comunicativă, ci la competența informațională. Informațiile nu trebuie doar reperate; cursantul trebuie să le evalueze, să le ierarhizeze și să le reutilizeze (Puren, 2020, p. 11). Logica documentării e una dintre cele două logici specifice perspectivei acționale, unde textele informative sunt puse în serviciul acțiunii sociale (Puren, 2020, p. 12).
5. Logica socială e a doua logică specifică perspectivei acționale și pune acțiunea socială în serviciul textelor literare. Cursantul nu mai e doar lector, actor, autor, ci devine agent literar într-un câmp social al literaturii. Această logică integrează proiectul literar în unitatea de învățare – prezentarea unei opere într-o revistă, interviuri cu autorii, dezbateri publice, organizarea unei sărbători a literaturii / poeziei etc. (Puren, 2020, p. 12).

Evoluția diacronică a modelelor în logica documentară ilustrează o creștere constantă a contribuției cursantului în explorarea documentului sursă, ceea ce favorizează dezvoltarea creativității sale. Dacă în logica literară și în logica documentului, operele de artă și documentele autentice sunt surse a căror valoare incontestabilă trebuie transmisă cursantului, în logica suport, documentul devine pretext pentru interacțiunile comunicative dintre cursanți. Cursantul are acces la o multitudine de documente, nu mai este limitat la un singur document sau la

fragmente selectate de specialiști. Aceștia se dă statutul de actor social pragmatic care, folosind competența informațională, poate selecta documentele relevante pentru intențiile sale. Obiectivul expunerii cursantului la documente în limba țintă nu mai este numai absorbirea informațiilor, ci utilizarea creativă și strategică a acestora în scopul realizării unei sarcini exterioare textului, a unei sarcini de tip acțional, cu un rezultat concret în realitatea socială imediată. Libertatea, creativitatea, competența informațională, strategiile de sintetizare ale cursantului sunt elemente care vor pune în prim-plan mai mult cursantul, cu credințele și valorile lui, decât textul citit sau informația transmisă. Dacă în logica literară, cea a documentului și cea a suportului, cursantul e inferior textului sursă, în logica documentării și în cea socială, cursantul devine agent creator: el recrează, reorganizează și pune în valoare documentele utilizate ca sursă de documentare, în funcție de obiectivele sale sociale, de intențiile și de valorile sale.

În demersurile didactice de informare colectivă în raport cu actualitățile difuzate la radio, cursanții au parcurs trei etape: documentarea individuală, interpretarea informațiilor și completarea acestora cu informații din spațiul cultural propriu, interacțiunea și medierea și, în final, autoevaluarea. Documentarea individuală s-a realizat conform logicii documentării, cursanții putând alege un buletin informativ recent, dintre cele puse la dispoziție de către cadrul didactic, pe platforma de învățare utilizată în universitate. Întrucât ascultarea documentelor audio este dublată de etapa de mediere personală a informațiilor (completarea cu informații similare din spațiul cultural familiar lor, identificarea aspectelor comune sau diferite între informațiile ascultate și propria experiență de viață), implicarea personală în alegerea buletinului informativ care va fi mediat, în mod personal, a fost mai mare. Cursanții au avut libertatea de a alege subiectele care îi interesează.

Logica documentării, spre deosebire de logica suportului, oferă posibilitatea de mediere intralingvistică (extragerea informațiilor esențiale din documentul ascultat, extragerea informațiilor esențiale din răspunsurile oferite de Chat GPT la întrebările cursantului legate de problematica abordată), interpersonală (ilustrarea relației dintre experiența personală și informațiile extrase), interculturală (completarea informațiilor cu altele similare din spațiul cultural al cursantului), interlingvistică (căutarea informațiilor similare, corespunzătoare altor spații culturale, în alte limbi). În logica documentării, informațiile mediate sunt noi pentru toți cursanții, mai puțin pentru cel care le mediază; în logica suportului, informațiile conținute de text sunt accesibile tuturor, astfel că medierea intralingvistică nu este impetuos necesară, toți cursanții având acces la informațiile esențiale din textul dat.

MODELE DE IMPLEMENTARE A MEDIERII, ÎN ÎNVAȚAREA LIMBILOR-CULTURI

Vom descrie în continuare experiențe didactice în care am implementat medierea, la grupele de studenți internaționali de la Universitatea de Medicină și Farmacie „Iuliu Hațieganu” Cluj-Napoca. Demersurile didactice la care ne referim au la bază proiectul colectiv de informare despre actualitățile locale, naționale și internaționale, pornind de la buletine informative difuzate la un post de radio local. În urma unui acord de colaborare între postul de radio local și Universitatea de Medicină și Farmacie „Iuliu Hațieganu” Cluj-Napoca, studenții din anul al II-lea, pentru care nivelul de referință este A2, au avut acces, pe platforma de învățare a universității, la buletinele informative difuzate pe postul de radio local. Pornind de la aceste documentele audio, în proiectul colectiv de informare, pe subiecte de actualitate, li s-a propus studenților următoarele două modele de activități :

Modelul 1

- A. Documentarea individuală – fiecare cursant a ales un buletin informativ recent și l-a ascultat, în scopul completării unei fișe de activitate:
1. Alegeți un buletin informativ, ascultați-l și notați câteva idei principale.
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 2. Căutați știri similare din locul vostru de origine și aduceți informații suplimentare pentru buletinul informativ ascultat.
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 3. Precizați care sunt aspectele comune dintre experiența voastră personală și subiectele abordate în buletinul informativ.
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- B. Mediere și interacțiune – studenții au lucrat în echipe și au schimbat informații notate pe fișe. Fie au schimbat fișele, fie au prezentat idei notate pe fișe. După prima etapă de mediere și interacțiune, a urmat a doua etapă, în care s-au

schimbat binomurile, iar fiecare student a formulat, pentru noul partener de echipă cea mai interesantă idee vehiculată în etapa anterioară de mediere și interacțiune. Apoi, în a treia etapă de mediere și interacțiune, studenții au formulat frontal cele mai interesante idei auzite în etapele anterioare, idei referitoare fie la actualități, fie la colegii care au prezentat actualitățile. De asemenea, o altă variantă de raportare frontală este notarea pe bilete a unor informații vehiculate în etapele anterioare, informații referitoare fie la colegi (*Nu am știu că el / ea ...* .), fie la mediile socio-culturale din care aceștia provin.

C. Autoevaluare – studenții au completat următoarea fișă de autoevaluare:

Autoevaluare – procesul de realizarea a proiectului			
1.	Estimez că am fost motivat/motivată pentru realizarea proiectului de informare.	Da. Așa și așa. Nu prea. Nu, deloc.	Da? De ce? Nu? Ce pot face pentru a ameliora situația?
2.	Estimez că sunt mai conștient/conștientă de strategiile mele de învățare.	Da. Așa și așa. Nu prea. Nu, deloc.	Da? De ce? Nu? Ce pot face pentru a ameliora situația?
3.	Estimez că am mai multă autonomie în învățare.	Da. Așa și așa. Nu prea. Nu, deloc.	Da? De ce? Nu? Ce pot face pentru a ameliora situația?
4.	Estimez că am progresat în privița cunoștințelor multiculturale.	Da. Așa și așa. Nu prea. Nu, deloc.	Da? De ce? Nu? Ce pot face pentru a ameliora situația?
5.	Estimez că am progresat în utilizarea limbii române.	Da. Așa și așa. Nu prea. Nu, deloc.	Da? De ce? Nu? Ce pot face pentru a ameliora situația?
6.	Estimez că am adus o contribuție personală și eficientă în activitățile de învățare în grup.	Da. Așa și așa. Nu prea. Nu, deloc.	Da? De ce? Nu? Ce pot face pentru a ameliora situația?
7.	Estimez că activitățile colective m-au ajutat în schimbarea unor opinii personale.	Da. Așa și așa. Nu prea. Nu, deloc.	Da? De ce? Nu? Ce pot face pentru a ameliora situația?

Modelul 2

- A. Documentare colectivă – cursanții aleg prin vot una dintre cele două-trei actualități selectate de către cadrul didactic, apoi ascultă toți același buletin informativ, cu scopul de a răspunde la întrebările *cine?*, *când?*, *unde?*, *ce s-a întâmplat?*, *de ce?*. Având posibilitatea să aleagă dintre două sau trei titluri de buletine informative, aspect foarte important în demararea activității, studenții își manifestă interesul pentru un anumit subiect și în același timp rolul de actori sociali, afectați sau motivați într-o mai mare sau mai mică măsură de subiecte de actualitate din societatea în care trăim. Dacă subiectul votat pentru activitatea de documentare colectivă este altul decât cel preferat de anumiți studenți, subiectul preferat poate fi aprofundat în mod individual, ulterior, în măsura în care interesul se menține. Cu alte cuvinte, posibilitatea ca studenții să aleagă un subiect de actualitate care va reprezenta punctul de plecare pentru activitatea didactică, conduce, pe de o parte, la asumarea rolului de actor social, iar pe de altă parte, suscită interesul pentru documentări individuale, ulterioare activităților de învățare în clasă.
- B. Mediere și interacțiune – după prima ascultare sau după a doua ascultare, cursanții lucrează în perechi pentru a-și completa reciproc notițele. Mediarea se realizează, în acest caz, prin reformularea, explicitarea, simplificarea informațiilor înțelese de un cursant, astfel încât acestea să fie transmise partenerului de echipă, urmând ca mai apoi să fie reformulate de cel care le ascultă, pentru a fi notate sintetic. Se ascultă buletinul informativ încă o dată pentru verificarea informațiilor notate și pentru completarea acestora, apoi, frontal, fiecare cursant sau fiecare binom formulează o idee interesantă și nouă. Astfel, informațiile formulate frontal și notate pe tablă vor depăși cantitativ informațiile notate în mod individual, iar fiecare cursant va putea să își completeze notițele. În prezentarea frontală a informațiilor, li se cere cursanților o mediere a informațiilor prin filtrul personal, în funcție de gradul de noutate a datelor notate. Studenții formulează enunțuri de tipul „Nu am știut că ...”, „E interesat că ...”, „E bine că ...”, „E revoltător că ...” etc.
- C. Documentare individuală după logica documentării, mediere și interacțiune – studenții sunt rugați să caute informații ce reiau subiectul abordat în buletinul informativ ascultat, corespunzătoare spațiului cultural propriu. Sursele de informare sunt la alegere, pe de o parte, documente accesibile online în limba română sau în altă limbă la care au acces cursanții, pe de altă parte, Chat GPT în limba română. Cursanții se documentează în mod individual, după logica documentării, urmând să sintetizeze, în limba

română, informațiile esențiale pe care vor să le transmită colegilor. În plus, cursanții aduc informații suplimentare legate de experiența lor personală în raport cu subiectul de documentare. Studenții devin, astfel, în primul rând mediatori între alt spațiu cultural și subiectul abordat de buletinul informativ, dar și între propriile experiențe de viață și subiectul abordat. Medierea și interacțiunea devin, pentru cursanți, un câmp foarte propice intercunoașterii.

Dincolo de progresul în limba română, care este doar unul dintre cele șapte criterii de autoevaluare (alături de motivație, conștientizarea strategiilor de învățare, autonomie, progresul în cunoștințele multiculturale, progresul în utilizarea limbii, contribuția personală la activitățile de învățare în grup, utilitatea activităților de grup pentru realizarea proiectului), se urmărește medierea tuturor resurselor utilizate, prin filtrul personal al fiecărui cursant, precum și interacțiunea dintre aceștia, în construirea sensului.

CONCLUZII

Studiul nostru evidențiază relația indestructibilă dintre logica documentării și mediere, precum și alinierea la politicile lingvistice europene, prin implementarea acestor concepte (logica documentării și medierea) în didactica limbilor-culturi. Proiectul de informare despre actualitățile locale, naționale și mondiale, care are la bază logica documentării și în care fiecare student alege un buletin informativ dintre sursele de informare puse la dispoziție favorizează medierea intralingvistică, interculturală și interpersonală. Medierea, indestructibil legată de interacțiune, împreună cu receptarea orală și scrisă, precum și cu producerea orală și scrisă, activități care se regăsesc și în demersurile didactice descrise mai sus, conduc la adoptarea, de către student, a ipostazei de actor social, dar și la progresul în limba țintă. Acest progres se desfășoară după un model experiențial, în care actorul social mobilizează toate competențe sale (generale și lingvistice în realizarea unei sarcini) și pe care le ameliorează în timpul procesului de învățare-utilizare a limbii.

Libertatea de a alege, valorificarea individualității fiecărui cursant, valorificarea contextului socio-cultural responsabil de filtrarea informațiilor, experiențială a unei limbi străine, sunt valori aliniate politicilor lingvistice europene actuale. Logica documentării este, conform demersului argumentativ de mai sus, cheia în implementarea medierii și a abordării acționale în didactica limbilor-culturi.

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SECȚIUNEA 2

Abordări în predarea limbajelor de specialitate

Using Drawing and Scenario Writing Apps to Create ESP Content

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Abstract: One of the most challenging aspects to teach in an effective manner within the framework of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) classes is represented by technical vocabulary as it poses the issue of assimilating a quantitatively increased range of specialised clusters of words, collocations and idioms. Taking into account the pervasive manifestation of technology in education nowadays, a logically rendered response of its ubiquity in students' daily life, the current paper focuses on methodologically detailing the productive use of several applications in the case of students specializing in Horticulture and Landscaping, as well as in Management and Engineering in Tourism. The educational activities are designed around using both drawing apps, for Horticulture and Landscaping students and scenario writing apps, for Management and Engineering in Tourism students. In both contexts, these are meant to help the students benefit from the ESP interaction sessions by acquiring the targeted vocabulary unit, while mostly employing visual learning skills (in the former case) and by engaging them in communicative sequences that aim to develop speaking skills in professional situations, therefore inherently making use of specialized vocabulary. In addition, we mention that the selected apps, Sketchbook and Story Plotter, were created for mobile phones and other similar devices, thus facilitating immediate applied access. The ESP activities described in this paper put emphasis on the students' constant engagement in creating valuable educational content, transforming the learning process into an integral part of Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE).

Keywords: *technical vocabulary, drawing apps, scenario writing apps, visual learning skills, communicative skills*

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) at Higher Education level has become a comprehensive venture, converging the attention given to students'

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individual learning needs towards correlated insertions of learning traits and external reality characteristics within the educational process. Taking into account the theoretical aspects to be enlarged upon in the following sub-section, the current paper focuses on analytically describing several activities to be implemented during the ESP classes for students specialising in Horticulture, Landscaping and Management and Engineering in Tourism, as well as their advantages from a methodological standpoint and from the learners' perspective. As such, the paper is meant to underline the educational interactions for ESP subjects, targeting the effective acquisition of technical vocabulary and the improvement of communicative skills. In order to facilitate an efficient, contextualised aim achievement, two mobile phone applications will be further detailed, namely Sketchbook and Story Plotter, the former being employed for devising specialised vocabulary teaching-learning sequences, while the latter, for ensuring practical support when writing specialisation-related scenarios leading to professional mock-situations used for developing speaking skills. As a result, several possible output activities are minutely rendered, backed by students' ESP knowledge and mostly enlisting their creativity and jocularity, in a performative manner.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The English for Specific Purposes (ESP) educational process has been predominantly associated, *via* effective and long-term teaching practice, with two major aspects arising from applied regular interactions, namely technical vocabulary assimilation and speaking/communicative skills improvement.

In answering the question of what exactly the ESP vocabulary comprises, some researchers have identified three main categories, as follows: the technical or specialised vocabulary, with terms used and comprehended within a certain domain; the semi-technical or sub-technical one, consisting of meaningful items inside and outside a specific field (with the same or different comprehensive target); and a general vocabulary serving as basis for various communicative contexts, be them professional or not (Woodrow, 2018, p. 43). By keeping the threefold division, as well as a similar content correlation, other researchers use the phrases *Tier One* (basic vocabulary), *Tier Two* (cross-curricular, frequently-used vocabulary) and *Tier Three* (area-restricted vocabulary with a subsequent low use frequency) (Beck et al., 2013, Coxhead, 2017).

One of the main issues posing significant challenges in the course of teaching specialised vocabulary refers to the efficient assimilation of large units,

incorporating different lexical patterning structures such as vocabulary clusters, collocations and formulaic language (Woodrow, 2018, p. 43-44), Botany and Medicine being given as relevant examples from this point of view (Nation, 2013; Coxhead, 2017). Since vocabulary knowledge is also tightly connected to the content of specialisation-related knowledge (Woodward-Kron, 2008; Coxhead, 2017), this task becomes even more demanding for both the ESP provider and the higher education learners. And the difficulty level is even more enhanced when English is actually the latter's secondary language. The main reason for this resides in the fact that, although the amount of practical information to be acquired is the same, its corresponding renderings are doubled from a lexical standpoint - the learners need to retain the lexical items in both their native language and in the targeted foreign language. However, the predicament of such a learning task is surpassed by the fact that, once gained and reinforced, the respective technical vocabulary will strengthen the students' chances of better integrating into their professional communities, allowing them a common comprehensive communicative support (Ivanč, 1998; Wray, 2002; Woodrow, 2018).

Communicative skills, whether the communication takes place in an oral or written format, significantly contribute, along with technical vocabulary corpora, to the foundation of the ESP educational endeavours with Higher Education students. Furthermore, the communicative competence conceptualised by Hymes in 1966 (Woodrow, 2018, p.33) is further segmented into four sub-competences, namely grammatical, sociolinguistic, discoursal and strategic, the third one revolving around coherence and cohesion of spoken interactions and written practice (Canale & Swain, 1980; Woodrow, 2018). Nevertheless, within the specific ESP context, the ability to produce written messages is, quite often, subsumed to the ability to produce oral messages. Thus, it is largely used as a prompt for organizing ideas while using technical and semi-technical vocabulary, as well as a pre-speaking sequence meant to ensure fluency to a professionally situated spoken activity (dialogue, presentation). Moreover, the specificity of these activities also relies on providing enough authentic input (Woodrow, 2018, p.152-160) which should transform them into contexts similar to real-life situations, therefore offering the students the opportunity to engage in meaningful, genuine exchanges.

Intertwining the two aspects mentioned above and within the greater framework of employing as many technological advancements into the educational field, the concept of M-learning (using mobile phones during classes for learning purposes) turns out to be one of the most efficient and versatile teaching-learning

media, from several perspectives (Rangel-de Lazaro & Duarte, 2023), among which the following are worth mentioning:

- accessibility - both the devices and the corresponding learning applications are, nowadays, commodities for the majority of students (Măță et al., 2021), if not for all;
- readiness - the students are always ready and enthusiastic when it comes to using their mobile phones and/or tablets for different activities, especially in an environment that is mostly associated with a higher degree of cognitive effort, and not with the comfort of carefree activities;
- mobility - learning can happen anywhere, anytime (Naveed et al., 2023);
- collaboration - students may learn in a collaborative manner (Goksu, 2021) and, thus, benefit from improved information retention rate;
- visuality - when employing M-learning devices and their corresponding apps, the information provider (the ESP provider, in this case) does not only bank on the digital traits of the selected educational tools, but also on the highly visual nature of both knowledge assimilation, in the case of 60% of the learners (Gitnux, 2024) and the students' preference for visual input during classes (55%) (Gitnux, 2024).

EDUCATIONAL INTERACTIONS FOR ESP SUBJECTS

The particular English for Specific Purposes (ESP) activities targeted by the present paper address the 1st year undergraduates specialising in Horticulture, Landscaping and Management and Engineering in Tourism, the main reason residing in the fact that, according to their respective subject outline, the syllabus is designed in such a manner as to offer ample, comprehensive topics related to the specific, curriculum-based courses to be attended by students (the teaching language for these courses is Romanian).

There are two major directions for the educational interactions, namely one focusing on effectively and enjoyably teaching technical vocabulary (supported by semi-technical and general vocabulary insertions) and another one aiming at simulating real-life communicative situations, thus being prompted by previously prepared written scenarios (Woodrow, 2018). In the case of the former, due to the subject outline topics for Horticulture and Landscaping, the ESP interactions to be analytically rendered centre on using Sketchbook, a drawing mobile phone application that is free to install and easy to use. Out of the topics mentioned in the Horticulture and Landscaping ESP subject outlines at the University of Agricultural

Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Cluj-Napoca (first and second semesters), the most relevant to be tackled with the help of Sketchbook-based ESP exercises refer to *herbs and medicinal plants* (picture dictation), *fruit and vegetable growing* (idioms and word puns), *types of trees* (guess the tree) and *irrigation systems* (create your ideal garden). Because of the large amount of technical vocabulary items to be acquired in English, selecting this drawing app for teaching-learning purposes is one solution that appeals to a different set of skills, an aspect which is pedagogically and methodologically meant to divert the students' attention away from the high difficulty level of the task (from a quantitative standpoint) while associating positive emotions, and thus transforming the learning process into an engaging activity (Mihai et al., 2022).

The second direction mentioned above revolves around students specialising in Management and Engineering in Tourism, in an attempt to ensure a dynamic transfer of knowledge (Rajapakse, 2020, p. 196), at the level of area-related concepts grasped in both the students' native language (Romanian) and in their first foreign language (English). The end-result communicative activities aim to improve speaking skills in professional mock-situations, but the analytical interest lies with the written exercises designed as props, ensuring a smooth ongoing of the targeted speaking contexts. As such, the mobile phone application to be employed is Story Plotter which functions as a scenario writing digital tool, boosting the students' engagement in and motivation for an otherwise disfavoured activity (*i.e.* writing). Out of the topics in the ESP subject outline (first and second semesters), *banking* (dialogue writing and performing) and *marketing* (ad writing and presenting/performing) were selected for simulating professional communicative circumstances, the corresponding technical and semi-technical vocabulary being, this time, the aid meant to lead to improved presentation skills in a foreign language.

AFFORDANCES OF SKETCHBOOK AND STORY PLOTTER

Sketchbook is an accommodating mobile phone application, occupying 78,19 MB storage space. The functions listed in the upper part of the screen are displayed in a single bar and, once accessed there are several options one can choose from; the bar is also complemented by an almost invisible button situated at the bottom of the screen which, when pressed, quickly shows the most practical of functions. Besides the regular functionalities of saving the sketch, sharing it, importing other sketches

and undoing previous actions, the most important traits comprise, on one hand, the extremely wide range of pen tips that one can employ in order to render different types of drawing or even painting - there are 17 categories (primary/basic, markers, legacy, traditional, fine art, designer, smudge, glow, *etc.*), each of them displaying between 6 and 18 variations -, and, on the other hand, a varied array of colours and hues, all with the possibility of fine tuning and special adjustments (Figure 1).

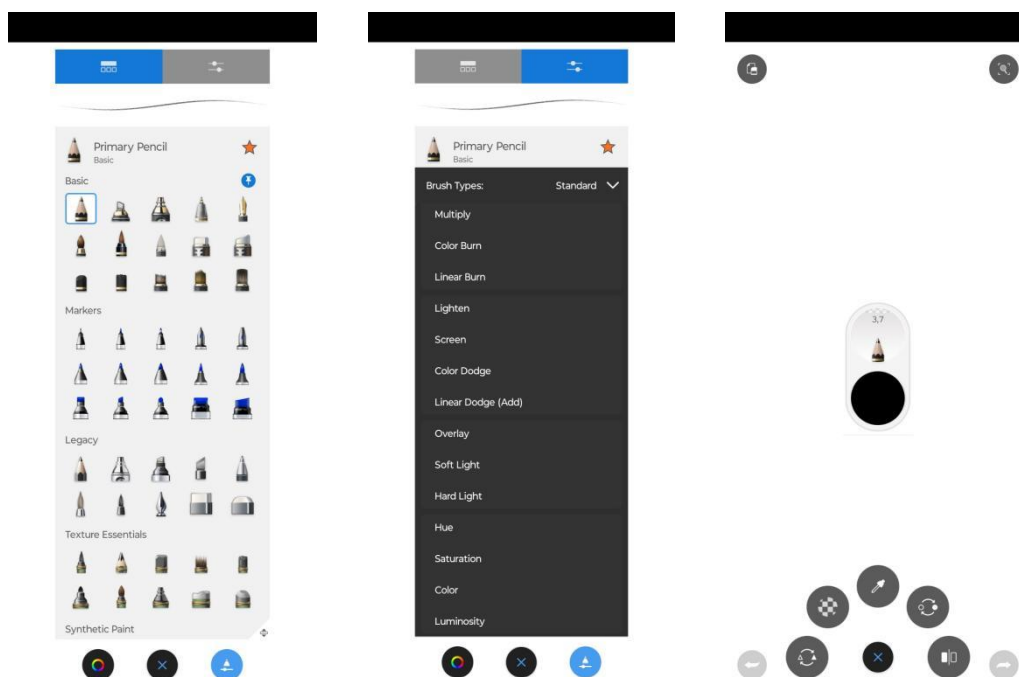


Figure 1. Sketchbook features

Source: My personal archive

In addition, there is a set of yet another 12 complementary drawing actions that could improve the final result - *selection, transform, fill, guides, symmetry, draw styles, predictive stroke, import image, perspective guides, text, time-lapse* and *auto-hide*. However, when used as a tool for ESP technical vocabulary retention, with Horticulture and Landscaping students, the 15 options each for basic pencil and, respectively marker categories suffice the educational objectives of the designed activities. Obviously, any of the complementary actions can be added, according to the students' individual choices (*text, auto-hide* and *symmetry etc.*).

With a size of 92,76 MB and basically meant for writing narratives, Story Plotter is also suitable for ESP scenario writing exercises in the case of Management and Engineering in Tourism students, as it allows collaborative pair or group work,

while also offering a readily available instrument for visually organising ideas and mock-dialogue progressions to be further exposed in oral interventions. The app is designed as to replicate a notebook, with a bottom bar allowing access to idea and plot notes, as well as a quick “add idea” button, and four main features projected in the upper part of the screen: *Create Time series*, *Create Correlation diagram*, *Create Character* and *Write Story* (Figure 2), each of them leading to different structures to help with the writing task, also displaying plot-, environment-, character- and theme-related elements.

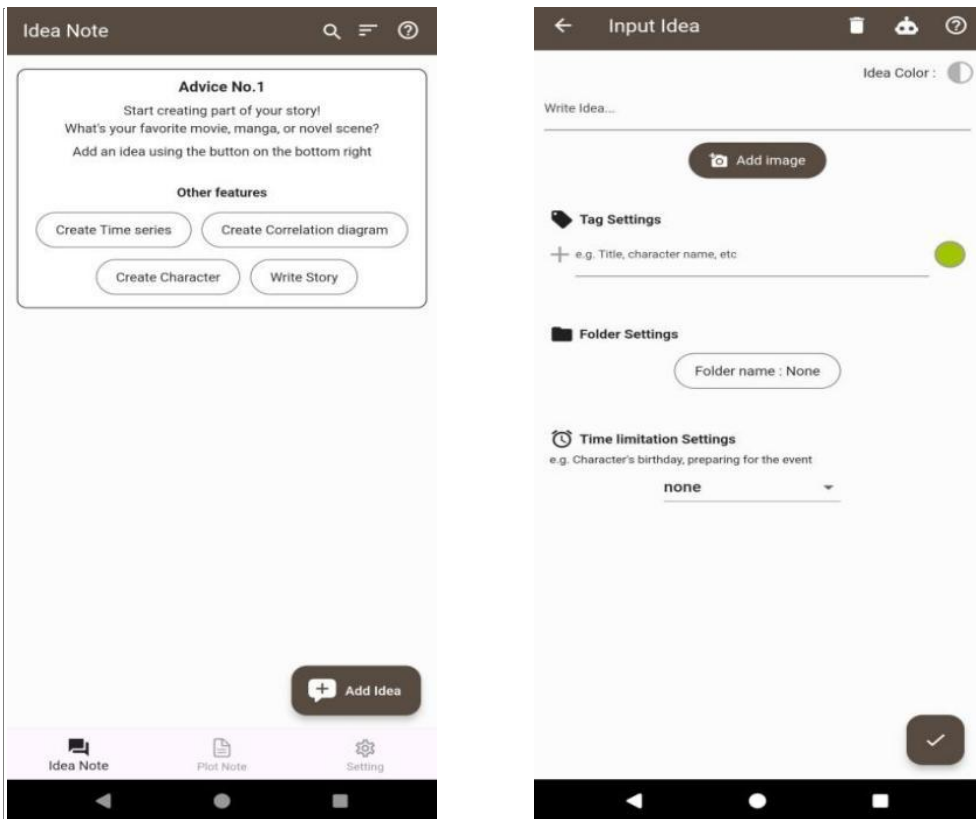


Figure 2. Story Plotter features

Source: My personal archive

Two major traits from the ESP point of view refer to the possibility of choosing the type of story to write, among them being micro stories and free mode writing and to the procedure of inserting images into the writing proper, selected from personal devices.

SKETCHBOOK - TECHNICAL VOCABULARY - HORTICULTURE AND LANDSCAPING STUDENTS

Among the many achievable designs of ESP activities targeting technical vocabulary in the case of students specialising in Horticulture and Landscaping, the current research analytically details four that can be practically and engagingly delivered by using the mobile phone app Sketchbook.

The first exercise refers to a classical picture dictation that could be easily inserted within the pedagogical activity layout corresponding to the *herbs and medicinal plants* topic in the students' ESP subject outline, as the items of technical vocabulary to be assimilated are numerous. In order to actively involve the learners in a drawing activity that actually targets listening comprehension skills in a specialisation-related context, the selection criteria should revolve around colourful plants and/or herbs and difficult terms to remember, so that the individual chromatically-varied results could add to the construction of positive emotions further leading to a better and long-term retention. As such, some target-vocabulary suggestions may refer to the following set of plants: seabuckthorn, the great yellow gentian, the great burdock, echinacea, lavender, marigold and aloe vera (nurserylive.com). These are relatively simple to draw and do not require a high degree of artistry. However, this exercise should be introduced in the practice sequence of the meeting so that the students may first get at least visually acquainted with the topic, as this will reduce their anxiety in dealing with such a task. In addition, the descriptive content of the dictation proper should be a blend between technical, semi-technical and general vocabulary, with Encyclopedia Britannica being a reliable source from this point of view (britannica.com). The ESP provider should be the one to generate at least the first picture dictation; according to students' response and, if willing, the dictation task could be transferred to one of them so as to transform the activity into a peer-learning experience.

The second exercise covers a set of idioms and word puns from the topic of *fruit and vegetable growing* and it is based on lexical jocularity meant to enhance students' engagement by resorting to their natural curiosity and sense of humour. Some examples of the potentially addressed elements are the following: carrot and stick, as cool as a cucumber, hot potato, to be the apple of one's eyes, apple-pie order, to polish the apple, rotten apple, to be a hard nut to crack, to be full of beans, to spill the beans, in a nut shell, as nutty as a fruit cake (The Free Dictionary by Farlex), or any of the word puns shown in Figure 3 (Kuehn, 2024).

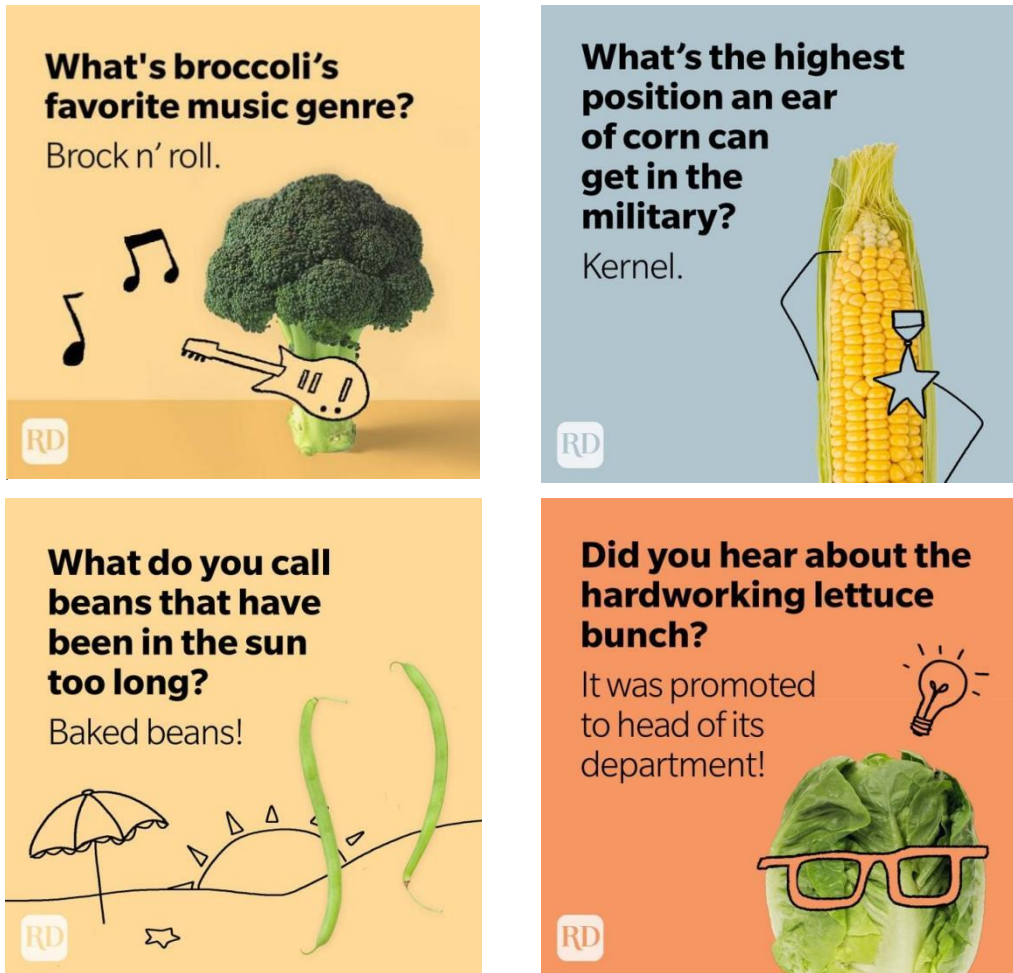


Figure 3. Word puns

Source: <https://www.rd.com/article/vegetable-puns/>

An effective and interactive manner of organising this activity would be to require the students to work in pairs; each pair should get distinctive sets of idioms and/or word puns. After searching for their meaning and/or understanding the pun, they will need to use the Sketchbook app and individually draw the given selection; the drawings will be shared with the rest of the class and the other students will be asked to guess the idiom, thus ensuring a raised level of engagement, motivation and collaborative work.

The third and the fourth exercises are more creative in nature, without the ESP provider's controlled guidance, both of them, though, benefiting from the fact that they can be put into practice by using Sketchbook. The former implies pair work and can be considered a consolidation activity, following previously

introduced technical vocabulary items on types of trees, some of these being terms such as *fir, spruce, weeping willow, birch, ash tree, elm, oak, yew, poplar, acacia, carob tree, chestnut tree, walnut tree, cocoa tree, rubber tree, ebony* and *mahogany* (britannica.com); each of the two students in the created pairs will select two or three items, graphically render them and then ask their colleague to guess the tree, by also providing supplementary clues, if needed. The latter is individually conducted and it fully relies on each student's artistic nature, as well as on their designing skills, as it requires them to create a sketch of their ideal garden by also implementing an irrigation system; the activity could be conceived as a follow-up of a listening comprehension sequence resulting from watching a topic-related clip (Garden Answer, 2020). It is also intended to be further presented as a shortened, on-the-spot conceptualised version of PBL (project-based learning) in which the students are invited to share their ideal garden with the rest of their colleagues, by presenting and explaining the sketch schematically drawn in the Sketchbook format.

STORY PLOTTER - COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS - MANAGEMENT AND ENGINEERING IN TOURISM STUDENTS

Story Plotter is one of the mobile phone applications that can be used in an adaptive manner to fulfill different writing tasks, either *per se* or as preparatory exercises. Although there are many topics in the ESP subject outlines for students specialising in Management and Engineering in Tourism that this app could be employed as a support of, the current paper tackles only two of them, namely *banking*, for dialogue writing, and *marketing*, for ad writing. Both contexts are meant for the students to make use of technical and semi-technical vocabulary when solving the respective tasks, and for willing further performance of the respective written products (the dialogues and the ads). Placed in the larger frame of teaching *banking* vocabulary and ensuing a correlated listening activity (Master Everyday English, 2023), as well as the analytical discussion of a sample dialogue (GrammarBank), the students are tasked with writing a dialogue, while working in groups, using Story Plotter and choosing one of the following scenarios: opening a bank account, withdrawing money from the bank, taking back one's bank account password, borrowing money from the bank and depositing money in an account. The targeted vocabulary structures to be used are those appearing in the clip, the dialogue, as well as any other discussed in previous ESP meetings (Albert, 2023, p. 79-89). Some representative examples could be *credit policy, payment terms, account,*

debts, to write off, current assets, intangible assets, to charge, balance, principal, interest, borrower, lender, capital loan, overdraft facility, to go into the red, joint account, interest rate, to go overdrawn, plastic, mortgage, to apply for a personal loan, etc. The second major unit refers to *marketing* and, the interrelated ESP activity revolves around generating ad scripts by students working in groups and using the Story Plotter to jot down their plot ideas, characters and dialogue lines. Moreover, they can use images to help design their end-product, as well as sketches individually achieved through Sketchbook. This activity is less guided from the perspective of the technical vocabulary input, as it allows the students creative flexibility and applied opportunities for materializing different marketing concepts such as *the 4 Ps (product, price, place, promotion), selling, target market, digital strategies, customer needs etc* (Kotler, 2000, Northern Arizona University website).

CONCLUSIONS

One of the major characteristics of the educational process nowadays refers to the challenge of transforming the learning environment into a highly interactive medium, usually by incorporating two main aspects, namely the insertion of technology and the design of engaging, even performative tasks, while, at the same time, maintaining a raised level of teaching-learning efficiency. This also, inherently, applies to ESP classes for Higher Education students. The particular case of students specialising in Horticulture, Landscaping and Management and Engineering in Tourism at the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Cluj-Napoca has been tackled by the current paper, being even further narrowed down to the sequences of enriching technical vocabulary and improving productive skills, especially as the former facilitates specialised information acquisition and corresponding updated content (Afzal, 2019). The two mobile phone apps chosen as suitable tools for rendering these specific teaching aims were Sketchbook and Story Plotter, mostly due to their ease of use and fast access, thus answering the students' preference for introducing technology, as an element of their daily reality, into the learning practice. The ESP methodological activities suggested were focused on several specific topics - technical vocabulary related to medicinal plants and herbs, fruit and vegetable growing, types of trees and irrigation systems, for Horticulture and Landscaping students, and productive skills associated tasks on the themes of banking and marketing for Management and Engineering in Tourism students. The main advantages of the exercises

described in the previous section impinge on enabling students to proficiently assimilate the targeted information cluster by employing the principles of visibility (picture dictation and drawing renderings in the Sketchbook format), lexical jocularity (reinterpretation of lexical units - idioms), as well as on creativity (presenting an individually designed garden sketch, writing contextualised scenarios as props to be further used for fulfilling performative tasks). However, a future research direction would refer to conducting a controlled progression of applying these activities, while quantitatively measuring the students' degree of satisfaction and effective information retention.

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Using Student-Delivered Oral Presentations as Instructional and Assessment Tools in an ICLHE Context

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Abstract: The term ICLHE (Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education) names a pedagogical approach that applies the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) principles to tertiary education. In other words, courses conceived and delivered according to ICLHE are taught in a foreign language and have a dual objective: content knowledge acquisition and improvement of language proficiency. One such course is Techniques and Methods of Negotiation and Communication (Tehnici și metode de negociere și comunicare) taught in English to non-native English-speaking MA students at the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport of Babes-Bolyai University. The present paper explores various uses of student-delivered oral presentations as instructional and assessment tools in higher education. The article contains five sections of which the first three are based on literature review and the fourth draws on the author's personal experience as a course tutor. Firstly, a rationale for using oral presentations in tertiary education settings is provided. Secondly, benefits and challenges of using student-delivered oral presentations for teaching, learning and assessment purposes are detailed. Thirdly, pedagogical recommendations for integrating student-delivered oral presentations into courses are delineated. Fourthly, the author's personal pedagogical approach to incorporating oral presentations into Techniques and Methods of Negotiation and Communication is laid out. The concluding section emphasizes the importance of factors such as the course tutors' familiarisation with the existing literature on the topic, their teaching experience and the emotional and instructional needs of the students in the development of a strategy for integrating oral presentations into a university course.

Keywords: *Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education (ICLHE), oral presentation, teaching, learning, assessment*

INTRODUCTION

The term ICLHE (Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education) names a pedagogical approach applied to a university course in which subject content is taught in a foreign language and which has a double goal: content

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acquisition and language skills development. Within this frame of reference, each lesson includes explicit instruction in content as well as language use (Schmidt-Unterberger, 2018, p. 534). In fact, ICLHE is the tertiary education counterpart of the more well-known term Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) (Costa and Coleman, 2013, p. 5), which is defined as “as a pedagogical approach with a dual focus, involving the integration of (second/foreign/target) language study with the study of a subject domain instructed in that language” (LANQUA).

The language policy of Babeș-Bolyai University specifies that at least two courses taught in an international language in conformity with the CLIL approach must be comprised in the curriculum plan of each master’s programme provided by the university. “Tehnici și metode de negociere și comunicare” —referred to in this article as “Techniques and Methods of Negotiation and Communication” (TMNC)— is one such English-taught course offered by the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport of Babeș-Bolyai University as part of the curriculum plan of the master’s programme called Management of Sports Organizations and Activities. With a duration of 14 weeks, the course comprises a lecture (2 hours long) and a seminar (1 hour long) per week and it is addressed to non-native speakers of English specialising in sports management.

Starting from the author’s experience as the tutor of TMNC, the present article explores various implications of integrating student-delivered oral presentations into tertiary education courses for instructional and assessment purposes. The first part of the paper highlights the special importance placed on students’ delivery of oral presentations and mastery of public speaking skills by higher education institutions and European educational policy makers. The second section presents the opportunities and challenges of using oral presentations in the classroom. The third part focuses on recommendations for integrating student-delivered oral presentations into courses. While the first three sections are based on a review of the literature on the topic, the fourth delineates the author’s personal approach to incorporating student-delivered oral presentations into TMNC. The author hopes that the synthetic presentation of the major aspects dealt with in the literature and the description of his personal pedagogical approach might be helpful to course tutors who intend to use student-delivered presentations as part of their instructional and assessment strategy.

A RATIONALE FOR USING ORAL PRESENTATIONS IN TERTIARY EDUCATION

The author's decision to incorporate oral presentations into TMNC is motivated primarily by the relevance of developing oral presentations skills to students' academic and professional communicative needs. Firstly, as most university students worldwide, the course attendees need to be acquainted with the conventions of English-language academic discourses in order to comprehend subject matter knowledge, develop careers and become successful learners (Hyland, 2006, p. 24). The student-delivered oral presentation is considered a spoken academic genre (Hyland, 2006, p. 50) or a situation in which speaking for academic purposes occurs (Jordan, 1997, p. 193), which makes it a suitable learning and assessment activity in tertiary education settings.

Secondly, as students in management, the course attendees need to become proficient in delivering oral presentations since good public speaking skills are vital to fulfilling managerial functions. Giving briefings, presenting reports, increasing staff morale, directing and coordinating effort, participating in decision-making processes are some of the most common uses of presentations in a manager's daily routine. Furthermore, success in domains such as market research and advertising depends on high quality presentations (Hargie et al., 2004, p. 148).

The literature on the topic supports the use of oral presentations as learning and assessment tools in higher education settings. Tasking students with presenting content related to a particular discipline is a widespread practice in universities around the world. Omnipresent at tertiary level, oral presentations enjoy special popularity as learning and assessing modes (Tsang, 2020a, 2020b). Given that developing students' foreign language communication skills is a priority in the context of the globalization and internalization of higher education (Gallardo del Puerto & Martínez Adrián, 2015), and that presentations skills are one of the facets of communication skills (Tsang, 2020b), oral presentations should be used as learning tools not only in courses delivered in students' L1 but also in English-taught courses (Gallardo del Puerto & Martínez Adrián, 2015).

Moreover, the importance of oral presentation skills has been widely acknowledged and the necessity of their development has been emphasized in higher education curricula (De Grez et al., 2009). Regardless of the field of activity, being able to present information publicly in a clear and eloquent manner in academic and professional settings is seen as one of the fundamental competences/soft skills of graduates of tertiary education (Van Ginkel et al., 2015; Van Ginkel et al., 2017; Murillo-Zamorano & Montanero, 2017). Moreover,

mastering the ability to present is crucial to achieving efficiency in the workplace, building career success and effectively participating in a democratic society (Van Ginkel et al., 2017).

The European educational policy makers, too, recognized the ability to present as a major component of tertiary education including it among the key learning outcomes to be achieved by higher education graduates. Thus, according to the framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area, in terms of communication, students must be able to “communicate information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialist and non-specialist audiences” (BWGQF, 2005, p. 195) in order to complete the first cycle of tertiary education. Furthermore, completion of the second cycle involves students being able to “communicate their conclusions, and the knowledge and rationale underpinning these, to specialist and non-specialist audiences clearly and unambiguously” (BWGQF, 2005, p. 196).

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) – an essential policy instrument concerning language education developed by the Council of Europe – mentions oral presentations among the productive activities playing a significant role in academic and professional fields (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 60). They are referred to as “addressing audiences.” The scale describing the ability to give presentations at public events, in meetings, seminars or classes includes the following aspects: type of address (the complexity of the presentation), considering the audience (adapting the presentation to the needs of the audience), and ability to handle questions (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 65). In addition to the productive elements of presentations, CEFR offers details on the receptive ability necessary to understand the speaker as a member of a live audience while participating in meetings, seminars, conferences, lectures, guided tours or various celebrations. The scale describing this type of oral comprehension is founded on key concepts such as following a talk accompanying real artefacts and visual aids, the degree of accommodation to the audience, familiarity of the situation and subject matter, and following a line of argument and distinguishing main points (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 50).

Taking into account that making oral presentations is relevant to students’ academic and professional instruction and that developing oral presentation skills is highly valued by universities and European educational policy makers, it can be maintained that student-delivered presentations can legitimately be used for instructional and assessment purposes in TMNC.

BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF USING STUDENT-DELIVERED ORAL PRESENTATIONS AS LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The student-delivered oral presentation is a versatile pedagogical tool that accomplishes a multitude of functions. A primary advantage is that it works both as a learning activity and a form of evaluation (Ramos-Álvarez & Luque, 2010, p. 336). In both cases, it infuses variety into the teaching-learning process. In terms of teaching, oral presentations are among the activities that can be utilized as alternatives to traditional forms of instruction such as large group lectures. With regard to assessment, oral presentations can be used as complements to traditional methods of evaluation such as pen-and-paper tests (Ramos-Álvarez & Luque, 2010, p. 336).

Students can benefit from preparing and delivering oral presentations by becoming competent communicators. Oral presentations involve students in a process during which communication happens both at the delivery stage and in the preparation phase when students negotiate meanings with each other in order to choose methods of presenting their ideas to the audience (Brooks & Wilson, 2015, p. 203). Accomplishing a task as a group involves interacting by means of meaningful language use (Chou, 2011, p. 273). In this context, target language can be practiced through exchange of ideas (Chou, 2011, p. 272).

In addition to developing interpersonal communication skills, the preparation stage encourages students to engage in cooperative learning. This method of study is considered beneficial in the language classroom for several reasons among which increasing the efficiency of the teaching-learning process, boosting learner motivation, and fostering inter-learner communication and collaboration (Chou, 2011, p. 272).

Furthermore, for a successful presentation delivery and a satisfactory performance during the Q and A session, students need to develop a complex set of communication skills. Various rubrics designed to evaluate the quality of oral presentations are informative in this respect. One such rubric focuses on the following aspects: keeping the attention of the audience, maintaining eye contact with the audience, adopting an open posture, employing illustrative gestures, using voice in an appropriate manner (in terms of pace, volume, and articulation), adjusting to the audience's verbal and non-verbal signals, clarifying the goal of the presentation, starting and closing with an appropriate introduction and conclusion, connecting the relevant parts of the subject in a creative way, increasing the audience's level of knowledge, and producing attractive and readable slides that are supportive of presentation (Van Ginkel et al., 2017, p. 486). Another rubric takes

into account elements such as pronunciation, clarity, accuracy, fluency, and the ability to express ideas in such a way that understanding is ensured. Being able to listen, ponder, give answers, express viewpoints, and defend the information presented is also considered desirable in a successful presenter (Ramos-Álvarez & Luque, 2010, p. 342-344). According to a third rubric, an additional aspect worth paying attention to in the evaluation of a presentation is the ability to manage time effectively (Otoshi & Heffernen, 2008, p. 78).

Moreover, delivering an oral presentation is a useful pedagogical tool in that it fosters the development of a wide array of study skills such as introducing and concluding, describing, defining, exemplifying, classifying, assuming, hypothesising, comparing, advising, expressing caution, summarising, paraphrasing, formulating questions, agreeing, disagreeing, interrupting, and apologising. Many of these are used in other forms of academic communication as well (i.e. writing essays, reports, dissertations, theses, and exams) (Jordan, 1997, p. 9).

What is more, producing and using visual aids to support speech has particular instructional merits in terms of developing students' multimodal communication skills. Turning the text of the presentation into slides is one of the tasks that students in higher education are expected to perform. This is done according to a set of good practices. One of these says that only the main points of the speech should be included in the slides in a form which is more concise than the full text of the presentation. Additional normative recommendations with respect to slide design include instructions on text and slide colour, font size and pictures, animations, or diagrams (Gillett et al., 2009, p. 246-247).

Foreign language proficiency improvement is another major benefit of student-delivered oral presentations. They promote the development of oral competence in L1 as well as in L2 (Gallardo del Puerto & Martínez Adrián, 2015, p. 77). One instructional merit of oral presentations in this respect is that they give students the opportunity to practise a foreign language in an authentic way by involving them in realistic language tasks. Students do not use the foreign language solely to comprehend the subjects of their presentations but also to convey their knowledge to the audience. Furthermore, all four language skills are used in the various activities carried out before, during and after the presentation in an integrated way. Firstly, during the preparation phase students use reading and writing to conduct research and design visual aids. Then, at the delivery stage students speak to communicate their ideas to the audience. Finally, to understand the information provided by the presenters and to interact with them, the members

of the audience employ their listening comprehension skills (Brooks & Wilson, 2015, p. 203-204).

A further benefit of oral presentations is that they involve students in a wide range of learning processes. Thus, they can learn from the instruction they are provided, the observation of other presenters and from practising themselves. Feedback reception and provision as well as self-reflection are also learning opportunities. Furthermore, creative thinking, classroom discussion and goal setting are additional learning sources associated with oral presentations (Van Ginkel et al., 2015, p. 67).

Student centeredness is another positive feature of oral presentations. During the delivery of presentations direct control over content and flow of the classroom is held by students who function as both teachers and learners (Brooks & Wilson, 2015, p. 203). Allowing students to assume the role of the teacher has benefits such as presenting the material from a different point of view, avoiding ineffective communication practices noticed in teachers' performance, and working hard to avoid making mistakes so as not to be embarrassed in front of the colleagues (Sander et al., 2002, p. 78). As a result, the quality of seminar discussions and participation improves (Sander et al., 2002, p. 79).

What is more, involving students in the teaching process increases their sense of responsibility (Ramos-Álvarez & Luque, 2010, p. 336), which, in turn favours deeper engagement with the material presented (Sander et al., 2002, p. 87). The knowledge retention achieved by students' direct involvement in the organization and presentation of notions, topics and contents is superior to that derived from instruction delivered by somebody else (Ramos-Álvarez & Luque, 2010, p. 336). Furthermore, in search of appropriate content to include in presentations students are likely to expand their exploration beyond textbooks by consulting original sources (Sander et al., 2002, p. 79), thereby gaining further knowledge.

Moreover, responsible students are necessarily independent and autonomous learners. Indeed, one benefit of oral presentations is that they stimulate autonomy and independent learning (Sander et al., 2002, p. 78). Some aspects of autonomous learning that are crucial to preparing oral presentations include investigating, searching, coding, summarising, interpreting information from various sources, deducing information from cues and evidence, drawing conclusions, judging, arguing, and analysing critically (Ramos-Álvarez & Luque, 2010, p. 334).

Another way in which students can benefit from making oral presentations is employability enhancement. The ability to deliver oral presentations and public speaking skills represent generic or personal transferable skills that may enhance

students' chances of finding jobs after graduation (Grieve et al., 2021, p. 1282; Sander et al., 2002, p. 79). The communication skills that students acquire in a presentation class are highly valued by many prospective employers. What is more, being able to present in a foreign language may be an additional asset since, on the present-day globalized labour market, there is a high possibility that future professionals will be required to deliver presentations in English (Brooks & Wilson, 2015, p. 204).

In addition to the above-mentioned instructional benefits, the student-delivered oral presentation offers advantages as a form of assessment too. Similar to more traditional forms of evaluation (i.e. paper-and-pen), oral presentations allow teachers to assess students' overall understanding of the course contents (Kao & Craigie, 2018, p. 74). Additionally, by means of oral presentations students' ability to expand upon formerly acquired knowledge and apply it to their own work can be evaluated (Sander et al., 2002, p. 79). More comprehensive than traditional practices, the oral presentation assessment may offer the opportunity to evaluate, besides the acquisition of new content, certain essential skills that are commonly neglected in examination, such as group behaviour and organizational skills, the ability to learn and adapt to new situations, interpersonal and social abilities, emotional intelligence, and ability for leadership (Ramos-Álvarez & Luque, 2010, p. 341-344).

Practical as oral presentations are, they pose certain challenges that should be taken into account when integrating them into courses. According to researchers, students express reservation about the merits of oral presentations as instructional and assessment tools. A study comparing students' experience with presentations in CLIL and EFL contexts, revealed the fact that neither of the two groups liked delivering presentations (Gallardo del Puerto & Martínez Adrián, 2015, p. 89). Anxiety and doubt about the quality of the information received from presentations delivered by peers have been mentioned as reasons for concern (Sander et al., 2002, p. 77). Worryingly, it has been shown that fear of public speaking has a negative overall effect on some students' educational experience (Grieve et al., 2021, p. 1286).

Concerning the presentation-related anxiety experienced by students in academic settings, a number of causes have been mentioned, including peer response, familiarity with the audience, pronunciation accuracy, self-perceived oral ability and personality, complexity of presentation, performance expectancy, previous success or failure, and time pressure (Kao & Craigie, 2018, p. 75). Other sources of anxiety revealed by research are physical symptoms (i.e. shaking/sweaty hands, blushing, dry throat, etc.) and uncertainty about the topic (i.e. fear of making mistakes and inappropriate understanding of the topic) (Grieve et al., 2021, p. 1285-

1286). It was also discovered that social anxiety associated with instructional activities involving public speaking may lead to cognitive disorders such as thought-blocking. Furthermore, task performance was reported to be negatively influenced by excessive self-preoccupation and self-consciousness. Moreover, the coping strategies used by students had equally negative effects on their learning experience (i.e. avoiding presentations if possible, hiding at the back of the class so as not to be noticed and swapping modules to avoid making presentations) (Russell & Topham, 2012, p. 381).

In addition, using foreign languages as a medium of communication poses its own problems. When presentations are not delivered in students' L1, second or foreign language speaking anxiety is a further source of stress due to lesser familiarity with the language of communication (Kao & Craigie, 2018, p. 73). What is more, studies have shown that lecturing in L2 requires more time to convey information than in L1. The rate of delivery has been proven to slow down by 25%-45% when L2 is used in presentations. This "slow-down effect" results in loss of pieces of information if lecture time is not extended (Hincks, 2010, p. 16).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INTEGRATING STUDENT-DELIVERED ORAL PRESENTATIONS INTO COURSES

As shown in the previous section, student-delivered presentations have multiple and diverse benefits. However, devising strategies for integrating these activities into courses involves giving due consideration to certain problematic factors to circumvent possible pitfalls. In what follows several good practices recommended by the research on the topic are presented.

Certain recommendations are formulated as methodological instructions on assimilating oral presentations in courses. For example, Brooks & Wilson (2015) put forward a practical guide for the implementation of oral presentations in L2 lessons. According to their framework, students should be instructed in various aspects of giving oral presentations prior to engaging them into devising and planning their own speeches. They should be familiarized with the structure of the presentation by means of gradual scaffolding, which implies exposing them to examples of presentations and asking them to identify the various stages. Thus, presentations can be divided into meaningful sections and taught separately, which contributes to reducing the cognitive load on students (Brooks & Wilson, 2015, p. 207).

Genre specific language items –vocabulary and grammar characteristic to presentation— should also be explicitly taught and practiced during the course. In

addition, students should become familiar with the use of gestures and phrases needed for signposting which are essential to the organization of the speech. Conversation strategies (word stressing, repetition, chunking, and paraphrasing) should be included in students' instruction as well (Brooks & Wilson, 2015, p. 208).

The use of visual aids is also encouraged. They are useful in that they function as a concrete support for the message delivered and thus contribute to the understanding of the information conveyed. Visual aids also act as stress relievers by helping speakers deliver their presentation. What is more, designing visual aids offers the opportunity to engage in a collaborative task and gives students with different learning styles the chance to contribute to the presentation success (Brooks & Wilson, 2015, p. 208-209).

Finally, self-reflection after the presentation is recommended. As homework, researchers asked students to watch a video recording of their presentation and to reflect on certain aspects. This activity was beneficial in that it allowed students to identify issues they had not been aware of during the delivery such as not maintaining eye contact with the audience, not speaking loud or clearly enough, and assuming unsuitable postures (Brooks & Wilson, 2015, p. 209).

Another valuable guiding framework for the integration of oral presentations into courses is the one developed by Van Ginkel et al. (2015). Drawing on information gleaned from fifty-two publications on the topic, the authors formulated seven design principles for developing the oral presentation competence. The principles are organized into the following three categories: instruction, learning activities and assessment strategy. According to the first principle, students must be provided with clear instructions on the learning objectives which must be formulated in accordance with oral presentation standards. As stated by the second principle, the presentation assignment must be related to the content of the discipline studied and it must be perceived as authentic by the students. Furthermore, the complexity of the task must be developed gradually during the course. The third and fourth principles say that students must be exposed to models of peers or experts as well as given the opportunity to practise delivering oral presentations. The fifth, sixth and seventh principles refer to the assessment strategy and emphasize the importance of aspects such as providing students with explicit, relevant and timely feedback, stimulating peer feedback as formative assessment, and fostering self-assessment by means of videotaping and portfolios (Van Ginkel et al., 2015, p. 68).

A particular set of recommendations are conceived as methods of helping students to cope with fear of public speaking or social anxiety. Some relevant

suggestions —collected from the students themselves— include organizing physical workshops on oral presentations, affording occasions for public speaking exercises in a comfortable environment, organizing practise sessions in small groups, including instruction in presentation skills as part of courses etc. (Grieve et al., 2021, p. 1287). These suggestions are consistent with the above-mentioned recommendations formulated by Brooks & Wilson (2015) and Van Ginkel et al. (2015). Other methods of anxiety management comprise adopting pedagogical approaches aimed at decreasing performance anxiety and embarrassment in the classroom, refraining from directing questions to individual students in large groups, gradually familiarising students with public speaking activities, and encouraging peer-support (Russell & Topham, 2012, p. 383-384).

A last recommendation worth mentioning regards the temporal constraints imposed by delivering presentations in a foreign language. As shown in the previous section, it takes longer to convey a certain amount of information in L2 than in L1. Furthermore, information loss occurs due to this slow-down effect. As a result, it is advisable to adjust the time allotted to presentations at conferences and other meetings when speakers use a lingua franca as a medium of communication (Hincks, 2010, p. 16).

INCORPORATING ORAL PRESENTATIONS INTO TMNC: A PERSONAL PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

Student-delivered oral presentations are central to TMNC as the seminars of this course are structured entirely around them. While lectures are designed, delivered and coordinated by the teacher, seminars are conceived as opportunities to encourage students to take responsibility for learning by actively engaging them in the pedagogical process. During presentations it is incumbent on speakers to use English to provide relevant and correct information to their peers in a clear, coherent and engaging manner in order to facilitate subject content acquisition and language proficiency improvement. The major learning objectives set by the tutor of the course in relation to student-delivered presentations are as follows: developing students' academic study skills, improving PowerPoint/Canva slideshow designing skills, ensuring acquisition of content knowledge and enhancing students' oral, and written ability to communicate in English in management contexts. The last two objectives integrate the study of content with language instruction, which is the central tenet of ICLHE.

In addition to playing an essential role in the instructional process, oral presentations are a significant element of TMNC's assessment system counting as 40% of the final grade. The remaining 60% is divided as follows: 10% is awarded for class participation (during lectures and seminars) and 50% for the end-of-semester written examination.

Placing students at the centre of the educational process by tasking them with delivering instruction via oral presentations must be accompanied by substantial and consistent support from the teacher. Fear of public speaking, foreign language communication anxiety, the slowdown in the delivery rate, and avoidance coping strategies that impact the learning experience in a negative manner are some of the difficulties inherent to making oral presentations. They have to be taken into account when devising a strategy for integrating presentations into seminars. In what follows, three pedagogical principles underlying the incorporation of student-delivered oral presentations into TMNC are laid out. The principles were formulated by the author as a guide to good practices that combines his hands-on experience acquired as a course tutor and information provided by the literature on the topic.

The first principle stipulates that self-confident and uninhibited students stand a better chance to deal successfully with oral presentations. Helping students develop a positive self-image improves anxiety management and stimulates creativity. Providing a student-friendly environment in and out of the classroom and building a sense of belonging to a supportive community contribute to ensuring students' emotional well-being. In the case of TMNC, this goal is achieved by means of several practical methods such as stimulating student-teacher and student-student interaction, encouraging freedom of expression during lectures and seminars, providing constructive feedback, offering remedial language instruction whenever required, and keeping communication lines open via Microsoft Teams (the Learning Management System of the course) during working hours.

The second principle specifies that communicating a clear organizational procedure to students early in the course is essential to the good management of seminars. This allows students to become aware of the goals to be met both as presenters and members of audience, the topic to be approached in the presentation and the support offered by the teacher. The first organizational aspect presented to students is the four-stage structure of the seminar session: brief introduction of the presentation by the teacher, presentation delivery by the students, Q and A session and feedback offered by the teacher based on an assessment rubric designed for TMNC. Students are also informed that the score assigned by the teacher is open to

debate and that it can be modified if valid objections are presented and supported by concrete reasons and examples.

A further important organizational task to complete is the distribution of presentation topics among students. At the beginning of the semester, a collaborative Word document containing a table with the complete list of topics — including the dates they are scheduled for— is posted on Microsoft Teams by the teacher. Students are invited to form teams of two or three members (depending on the size of the group) and to choose a presentation topic during the first two weeks of the semester. No topic can be claimed by several teams, the table being filled in on a first come, first served basis.

The organizational procedure also includes the obligation of the students to send the PowerPoint/Canva slideshows to the teacher by email at least 24 hours before delivery. After a thorough examination of the slideshow, the teacher provides detailed constructive feedback to help students make improvements. Thus, the version delivered during the seminar is generally better than the initial draft. Moreover, presenters become more confident and are able to overcome nervousness when they are aware of the teacher's opinion on the slideshow.

The third principle says that instructing students adequately in preparing and delivering oral presentations is essential to their success. A significant instructional role in this respect is played by students' familiarization with the rubric designed for the assessment of the presentations. The rubric detailed in what follows is presented, explained and illustrated with concrete positive and negative examples as part of the introductory course which is aimed at informing students of the learning goals they are expected to achieve by the end of the semester. The assessment rubric takes into account two main aspects: the quality of the content knowledge presented and the presentation itself. Each of the two components is evaluated separately on a 0-4 scale and the final grade is obtained by calculating the arithmetic mean of the two scores obtained.

The evaluation of the content quality involves checking whether concepts, theories, processes, and elements essential to the topic have been included and properly explained in the presentation and verifying the reliability of the sources consulted. In this respect, including information extracted from the seminar's compulsory bibliography is mandatory and sufficient. However, should students feel the need to use supplementary bibliographical information, they are encouraged to do so as long as it is obtained from reliable sources such as scientific books or journals. When Internet sources like blogs, podcasts or video sharing

platforms are used, they must be acknowledged as credible by the teacher prior to the presentation.

As shown in Table 1, the assessment of the presentation contains 4 sections: structure, visual aids, delivery and language. Each one counts as 1 point. In terms of structure the presentation must contain an introduction, a main body and conclusions. These elements must be clearly distinguishable in the slideshow as well as in the delivery. The section dedicated to the introduction evaluates students' ability to introduce themselves, to state the title and the purpose of the presentation and to map the structure. The main body segment of the rubric examines to what extent the presentations' subtopics have been coherently organized and properly connected. The part dedicated to conclusions assesses students' capacity to review and summarise the main points of the presentation and to make suggestions. A list of all the sources consulted during the preparation of the presentation must also be included in the slideshow.

The section of the rubric dedicated to visual aids evaluates students' ability to design slideshows by means of presentation software such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Canva. In this respect, the four criteria considered are quantity of information per slide, visibility, relevance of pictures, videos, diagrams or graphs utilized and use of visual aids in the presentation. The appropriate amount of information to be displayed can be obtained by including only the main points in the slide in a paraphrased and summarised version. Visibility can be achieved by using font sizes and colours that make text easily perceived against the background from all around the classroom. The videos, pictures and graphs or diagrams are evaluated for audio-visual clarity, comprehensibility, relevance to the topic and illustrative qualities. The final criterion in this section —use of visual aids in the presentation— focuses on presenters' ability to embed references to the audio-visual elements in their speech in such a way as to enhance understanding and encourage deep audience engagement.

The delivery component of the rubric takes into account factors such as clarity (in terms of pronunciation and sentence construction), pace of delivery, fluency and, relationship with audience. The students who read their presentation entirely from notes lose most of the points allocated to this section since the abilities to spontaneously construct correct sentences, to speak at a reasonable pace and to maintain a constant speech flow cannot be evaluated in the absence of free spoken production. Special attention is given to the evaluation of the relationship with the audience developed throughout the presentation. Three aspects are assessed in this regard: maintaining eye contact with the audience, answering questions during the

Q and A session following the speech and creating opportunities for the audience to engage deeply and meaningfully with the content of the presentation. Such engagement can be achieved by designing quizzes or other kind of exercises for the attendees to solve. These tasks can be imbedded in the slides or produced on Internet platforms such as Wordwall, Mentimeter or Kahoot! They present the advantage of being easily accessible via mobile phones, tablets or laptops.

The fourth sector of the rubric is designed to evaluate the presentation from a linguistic perspective. The aspects considered in this section are spelling, punctuation, grammar, vocabulary and the use of language structures necessary to performing various communicative functions such as introducing the topic, mapping the presentation, listing, linking, sequencing, describing visual aids (charts, diagrams, and pictures), summarising, concluding, inviting and handling questions during the Q and A session, etc.

Table 1. Presentation assessment rubric
Source: Author's creation

STRUCTURE (1 POINT)	Introduction (0.25 points)
	Main body (0.5 points)
	Conclusions (0.25 points)
VISUAL AIDS (1 POINT)	Quantity of information per slide (0.25 points)
	Visibility (0.25 points)
	Quality and relevance of videos, pictures, and graphs (0.25 points)
	Use of visual aids in the delivery (0.25 points)
DELIVERY (1 POINT)	Clarity (0.25 points)
	Pace of delivery and verbal fluency (0.25 points)
	Relationship with audience (0.5 points)
LANGUAGE (1 POINT)	Language correctness (spelling, punctuation, grammar, vocabulary) (0.5 points)
	Communicative language functions (0.5 points)

This rubric works both as an instructional and assessment tool at various moments. First, when it is presented and explained to the students early in the course it functions as a teaching instrument since it serves to instruct students in making presentations. Then, it becomes a learning aid when students use it as a guiding framework for designing their own presentations. During the presentation, the teacher utilises it as an assessment grid. Finally, following the presentation and the Q and A session, the rubric turns into a learning-teaching instrument again when students receive feedback on their presentation's strengths and weaknesses.

CONCLUSIONS

This article has revealed multiple and diverse implications of using student-delivered presentations in tertiary education as instructional and assessment tools. The literature review has shown that oral presentations are commonly used in university settings and that developing oral presentation skills is considered particularly important by the European educational policy makers.

Furthermore, student-delivered presentations have been validated as versatile pedagogical instruments providing various benefits such as improving communication skills, fostering cooperative learning, developing study skills, cultivating multimodal communicative abilities, improving foreign language proficiency, favouring content knowledge retention, and stimulating autonomy and independent learning. However, the literature consulted revealed some challenges posed by oral presentations among which fear of public speaking, foreign language speaking anxiety and slower rate of information delivery in L2.

In addition, certain recommendations for integrating student-delivered oral presentations into courses have been identified. Providing students with adequate instruction in making presentations, giving them opportunities to practice, implementing an appropriate assessment strategy and encouraging self-reflection after the presentation are some examples of good practices suggested in the literature.

The principles underpinning the author's personal approach to incorporating oral presentations into TMNC are in keeping with the above mentioned suggestions. This student-centred pedagogical strategy relies on three principles: helping students to boost self-confidence and manage public speaking anxiety, communicating clear organizational procedures early in the course and instructing students adequately in preparing and delivering oral presentations. The rubric developed for the assessment of presentations plays an essential role by naturally bridging the gap between learning activities and evaluation procedures.

All in all, developing a strategy for integrating oral presentations into a university course is a complex undertaking that involves several aspects. Firstly, course tutors should become aware of the benefits, challenges and pedagogical recommendations provided by the literature on the topic. Secondly, teachers should devise their own strategies by adapting the findings of the existing research to their professional experience and the emotional and instructional needs of the course attendees. Thirdly, they should formulate their strategies as pedagogical principles that can be translated into clearly defined learning goals. Finally, they should identify practical methods of implementing the strategy which must be supported by appropriate instructional and assessment tools.

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Estrategias y recursos metodológicos en la enseñanza y aprendizaje del quichua en las escuelas rurales de Ecuador

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Resumen: La presente investigación es un estudio etnográfico dirigido a describir y comprender las prácticas educativas de 60 maestros y maestras indígenas de la escuela rural *Mushuk Rimak*, sobre cómo se enseña y se aprende el quichua en el contexto rural de San Lucas (Ecuador). Nuestro estudio presenta las narrativas de los maestros y maestras sobre la preservación del idioma quichua en la escuela, el hogar y la comunidad, detallando cómo estas descripciones se desarrollan a través de la interacción social (Stroud y Jegels, 2014). Esta capacidad de actuar en el mundo del aula está estrechamente relacionada con la construcción de la identidad y subjetividad de los niños que resulta de la socialización (Zeng, 2018). En este caso, destacamos el papel de la identidad en el cambio del contexto de aprendizaje, especialmente en un ámbito indígena, donde la revitalización del idioma involucra la capacidad de los maestros y las maestras para identificar las contradicciones y tensiones en su entorno de enseñanza y aprendizaje. La construcción de la identidad quichua en el medio educativo es también el efecto del reconocimiento del idioma quichua. Los resultados de esta fase cualitativa tienen grandes implicaciones para el diseño de nuevas pedagogías en contextos educativos indígenas con el propósito de implementar el idioma quichua en la escuela y preservar la educación bilingüe en Ecuador.

Palabras clave: *quichua, enseñanza-aprendizaje, identidad cultural, San Lucas (Ecuador), docentes indígenas*

INTRODUCCIÓN

La enseñanza del quichua en la escuela rural se aborda desde una perspectiva teórica que enfatiza la interacción social como un mecanismo clave para la construcción de significados dentro de un contexto educativo (Stroud y Jegels, 2014). En este sentido, las prácticas pedagógicas no son solo el resultado de decisiones individuales, sino que están profundamente ligadas a las estructuras sociales y culturales que configuran la vida cotidiana de los estudiantes y maestros

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y maestras. El presente estudio analiza y compara las diferentes narrativas de los maestros y maestras sobre cómo utilizan y enseñan el quichua en el aula, subrayando la importancia de la agencia docente en la preservación y revitalización de este idioma. Esta capacidad de los maestros y maestras para tomar decisiones en torno al uso del quichua está estrechamente relacionada con la construcción de la identidad y subjetividad de los estudiantes, procesos que, según Zeng (2018), se desarrollan a través de la socialización y son fundamentales para la formación de una identidad cultural sólida.

Asimismo, este trabajo pone especial énfasis en el papel que desempeña la identidad en la transformación del contexto de aprendizaje, particularmente en entornos indígenas donde la revitalización del idioma quichua implica la capacidad de los docentes para identificar y enfrentar las tensiones y contradicciones inherentes a su entorno de enseñanza. En este contexto, la construcción de la identidad quichua dentro del ámbito educativo se concibe como un efecto directo del reconocimiento del idioma, no solo como un medio de comunicación, sino como un símbolo cultural de resistencia y pertenencia. La preservación del quichua en la escuela, por tanto, no se limita a la mera enseñanza de la lengua, sino que está intrínsecamente vinculada con la formación de una conciencia identitaria que refuerza los lazos entre el individuo, su comunidad y su cultura.

Los hallazgos de este estudio tienen profundas implicaciones para el diseño de nuevas pedagogías en contextos educativos indígenas. A medida que se avanza hacia una mayor implementación del quichua en las escuelas rurales, resulta fundamental desarrollar enfoques educativos que no solo respondan a las necesidades lingüísticas de los estudiantes, sino que también promuevan la educación bilingüe como un medio para preservar y revitalizar el patrimonio cultural indígena en Ecuador. En este sentido, los resultados obtenidos en esta investigación cualitativa ofrecen valiosas perspectivas sobre cómo las prácticas educativas pueden ser adaptadas para fortalecer tanto la enseñanza del quichua como la identidad cultural de las comunidades indígenas, contribuyendo así a la sostenibilidad de la educación bilingüe en el país.

CONTEXTO DE INVESTIGACIÓN: SAN LUCAS (ECUADOR)

Este estudio se originó en la provincia del sur de Ecuador con una primera fase de descripción etnográfica y la creación de instrumentos de evaluación. Los maestros y las maestras indígenas que participaron pertenecen a la etnia Saraguro, localizada en la comunidad de San Lucas, un cantón en la Sierra ecuatoriana, a unos

55 km de la ciudad de Loja. En esta escuela, todos los estudiantes de San Lucas son hablantes nativos de español, sin excepción.

El centro educativo atiende a 388 alumnos y ofrece tres niveles de enseñanza: educación inicial, básica y bachillerato. La institución se encuentra en una zona donde el 95% de los estudiantes son de origen indígena. Aunque el pueblo de San Lucas es quichua, la mayoría de sus habitantes ha dejado de hablar su lengua materna, que ha sido desplazada por el español. Sin embargo, a pesar de esta pérdida lingüística, la comunidad ha logrado preservar su vestimenta tradicional quichua, por lo que no es sorprendente que todos los habitantes se distingan visualmente de otros ecuatorianos. Los saraguros son el único grupo étnico en la provincia de Loja que ha sobrevivido al proceso de colonización española.

En cuanto a los hombres, visten pantalones negros que llegan hasta la rodilla, usan sombreros negros y llevan el cabello largo, una tradición que jamás rompen. Esta práctica es observable también entre los niños, cuyo cabello largo es un símbolo de fortaleza espiritual, sabiduría y liderazgo, según la cosmovisión indígena. Esta tradición del cabello largo también se conserva en las comunidades amazónicas. Para la cosmovisión andina, el cabello está vinculado con la relación que una persona establece con su entorno, comparándose a los rayos del sol y al agua. También se considera un elemento de protección y un símbolo de masculinidad. El cuidado del cabello es fundamental y se utiliza una planta llamada *wituk*, que proviene de la selva, para mantener su color negro. El cabello se asemeja al agua de una cascada, y, además de usarse para el cabello, el *wituk* también se emplea como maquillaje. Por su parte, las mujeres visten faldas largas de color negro, sombreros negros y una prenda de lana de oveja, teñida de negro, conocida como bayeta, que sirve como abrigo.

Otro aspecto relevante de la cultura en San Lucas, Ecuador, es la medicina ancestral, que ha perdurado a pesar de los numerosos intentos de ser relegada por la medicina occidental. En la actualidad, su práctica es reconocida como un derecho de los pueblos indígenas. En esta comunidad, hay un considerable número de sabios que contribuyen al bienestar tanto físico como mental y social de la población.

LA ENSEÑANZA DEL QUICHUA EN SAN LUCAS

El aprendizaje de la lengua quichua en las escuelas rurales indígenas de Ecuador, en especial en el pueblo de San Lucas, tiene una profunda importancia tanto cultural como educativa. Esta lengua ancestral no es solo un medio de

comunicación, sino un elemento esencial de la identidad y cosmovisión de los pueblos indígenas. Para el pueblo de San Lucas, el idioma es un pilar fundamental de su identidad. En San Lucas, el quichua es una lengua que conecta a las nuevas generaciones con su herencia cultural, sus costumbres y sus formas tradicionales de ver el mundo. Aprender el quichua permite a los jóvenes saraguros mantener un vínculo con sus ancestros y preservar su cultura frente a la creciente influencia del español y la modernización.

En San Lucas, como en muchas comunidades indígenas de Ecuador, el quichua ha sido desplazado por el español, especialmente entre las generaciones más jóvenes. La enseñanza del quichua en las escuelas es una estrategia esencial para revitalizar el idioma, evitando su extinción y fomentando su uso cotidiano. Esto también fortalece el bilingüismo y la diversidad lingüística en el país. El aprendizaje del quichua como segunda lengua no solo tiene un impacto lingüístico, sino también emocional y psicológico. Los estudiantes que aprenden su lengua ancestral desarrollan un mayor sentido de orgullo y pertenencia a su comunidad. Esto refuerza su autoestima, al tiempo que promueve un respeto por su propia cultura en un entorno muchas veces dominado por una lengua y cultura hegemónica. La enseñanza del quichua en las escuelas rurales indígenas es una forma de resistencia ante la homogeneización cultural que puede resultar de la globalización y la influencia del sistema educativo tradicional, que históricamente ha priorizado el español. Mantener viva la lengua quichua fortalece la diversidad cultural y lingüística de Ecuador, protegiendo el patrimonio inmaterial de los pueblos indígenas.

En el caso de San Lucas, la implementación del quichua en las escuelas rurales refuerza los modelos de educación intercultural bilingüe, aspecto que permitiría a los estudiantes dominar tanto el español como el quichua. Este enfoque no solo facilitará el aprendizaje académico, sino que también promoverá un entendimiento más profundo de ambas culturas y contextos, dotando a los estudiantes de herramientas para desenvolverse en diferentes ámbitos sociales.

Cabe señalar que el quichua no es solo un idioma, sino también un medio para transmitir la cosmovisión indígena andina. A través de su aprendizaje, los estudiantes pueden acceder a conocimientos ancestrales, formas de relación con la naturaleza y valores comunitarios que están profundamente enraizados en su cultura. Esto es especialmente relevante en San Lucas, donde la comunidad Saraguro sigue manteniendo tradiciones que refuerzan su conexión espiritual con el entorno.

Con el objetivo de preservar sus lenguas ancestrales y proteger sus territorios, las comunidades indígenas han impulsado la creación de escuelas rurales dedicadas a la educación intercultural bilingüe. En respuesta, el Estado ecuatoriano ha implementado programas educativos que respetan el derecho de los pueblos indígenas a recibir formación en sus propios idiomas. Actualmente, el sistema educativo de Ecuador reconoce y respeta los derechos colectivos de las naciones y comunidades indígenas, permitiendo que los estudiantes accedan a una escolarización intercultural en los idiomas oficiales del país (Ministerio de Educación, 2013). En línea con este enfoque, el Ministerio de Educación ecuatoriano ha establecido el Modelo del Sistema de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (MOSEIB), basado en la necesidad de que las poblaciones indígenas reciban enseñanza tanto en sus lenguas maternas como en castellano. Este modelo busca no solo asegurar la supervivencia de las lenguas originarias, sino también otorgarles el prestigio actualmente asociado al español, la lengua dominante.

El MOSEIB constituye un componente clave de la educación en Ecuador, proporcionando a los docentes la oportunidad de impartir clases en lenguas indígenas a lo largo de diversas etapas de la educación obligatoria. El objetivo principal de este programa es reducir los índices de analfabetismo, que alcanzan un 42 % de deserción escolar, especialmente en la educación general básica, y fortalecer el sistema educativo en su conjunto (Chireac et al., 2017). A pesar de estos esfuerzos, el castellano continúa siendo visto como una vía de acceso a mejores oportunidades sociales y políticas, lo que ha provocado el desplazamiento progresivo de las lenguas originarias (Pomboza-Tamaquiza et al., 2024). Este proceso de aculturación ha llevado al abandono de los idiomas maternos por parte de muchas comunidades indígenas, como consecuencia de la marginalización y discriminación que han sufrido en diversos países de América Latina. El bilingüismo asimétrico ha facilitado la renuncia a las lenguas nativas y la adopción generalizada del español en casi todos los ámbitos de la vida social, especialmente en la comunicación.

Uno de los objetivos prioritarios de la educación intercultural bilingüe en Ecuador es garantizar el derecho de los pueblos indígenas a recibir educación en sus propias lenguas, con el fin de asegurar su supervivencia y su reconocimiento oficial junto al español. En este contexto pedagógico, resulta crucial promover la enseñanza tanto del quichua como del español, así como desarrollar materiales didácticos adecuados que respondan a las necesidades de los estudiantes indígenas ecuatorianos. Este enfoque metodológico pone de relieve el valor del quichua, una de las lenguas indígenas más significativas de América, como un elemento esencial de una cultura ancestral que debe ser preservada y fortalecida.

EL PAPEL DE LA LENGUA Y LA IDENTIDAD EN EL CONTEXTO INDÍGENA DE SAN LUCAS

Para comentar el tema de la identidad, hacemos referencia al estudio sociolingüístico de King (2001) centrado en la comunidad indígena de San Lucas, en la provincia de Loja, Ecuador, en el cual se analiza el estado de las lenguas en esta región, en particular el quichua y el español, en el contexto de la educación y la vida cotidiana de los habitantes. La investigación se enfoca en el uso y la transmisión del quichua, lengua ancestral de la etnia Saraguro, y su progresivo desplazamiento por el español, la lengua dominante en el país.

Uno de los hallazgos clave del estudio es que, en San Lucas, todos los estudiantes de las escuelas, sin excepción, son hablantes nativos de español. Esto significa que, a pesar de pertenecer a una comunidad quichua, el idioma que los niños aprenden desde la infancia es el español, no el quichua. El estudio subraya que el español ha reemplazado al quichua como lengua materna de las nuevas generaciones, lo que refleja un proceso de desplazamiento lingüístico acelerado en esta comunidad. Este fenómeno no solo se observa en el ámbito educativo, sino también en la vida cotidiana, donde el uso del quichua ha disminuido significativamente, limitándose a ocasiones formales o rituales. King (2001) también destaca varios factores que contribuyen a esta situación. Uno de los más importantes es la fuerte influencia de la lengua española en la educación formal. El sistema educativo de San Lucas, como en muchas otras comunidades indígenas de Ecuador, ha priorizado el uso del español como lengua de instrucción, dejando al quichua relegado a un segundo plano o a asignaturas específicas. Esto ha llevado a que los niños y niñas asocien el español con el éxito académico y el avance social, mientras que el quichua es percibido como menos útil o prestigioso.

Otro factor relevante es la presión social y económica. El español se ha consolidado como la lengua de la movilidad social, el acceso a oportunidades laborales y el poder político, tanto en San Lucas como en otras regiones del país. Esta percepción ha llevado a que muchas familias indígenas, incluso aquellas que son hablantes de quichua, opten por hablar solo español con sus hijos para facilitar su integración en la sociedad mayoritaria y mejorar sus perspectivas económicas y educativas. El estudio también subraya el impacto de la marginalización y la discriminación histórica hacia las lenguas indígenas, lo que ha fomentado la adopción del español. A lo largo de los años, los hablantes de quichua han sido objeto de prejuicios sociales, lo que ha acelerado el abandono de su lengua materna

en favor del español, un fenómeno común en muchas comunidades indígenas de América Latina.

Con la finalidad de preservar la identidad y la lengua quichua, la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja (UTPL), en colaboración con la Fundación General de la Universidad de Valencia, construyó el Laboratorio Interactivo de Lenguas Vivas quichua-español en la parroquia San Lucas, Loja. Este proyecto tuvo la finalidad de apoyar el proceso educativo y reforzar la identidad quichua de los niñas y niños de las comunidades locales a través de la enseñanza de los idiomas quichua y español.

Gracias a esta iniciativa se introdujo la innovación en el ámbito educativo para recuperar y valorizar el quichua mediante la creación de un laboratorio interactivo (Chireac y Arbona, 2019). Este espacio está equipado con más de 20 portátiles y diversos dispositivos tecnológicos, como una pizarra digital, proyector, televisor, impresora, equipo de sonido, además de una biblioteca con libros físicos y audibles, y varios programas informáticos. Todos estos recursos están diseñados con tecnología avanzada para garantizar la calidad y modernidad de las clases impartidas. Actualmente, este proyecto beneficia a 1600 estudiantes de 22 instituciones que forman parte del Circuito Educativo Intercultural "San Lucas", y cuenta con el apoyo de 73 docentes altamente calificados en la enseñanza del idioma, quienes pertenecen al Sistema de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe del Ministerio de Educación de Ecuador.

METODOLOGÍA

La presente investigación tiene como objetivo explorar y comprender las prácticas educativas de maestros y maestras indígenas en el contexto rural de San Lucas, Ecuador, con un enfoque específico en la enseñanza y el aprendizaje del quichua. A través de un estudio etnográfico realizado con 60 docentes de la escuela rural *Mushuk Rimak*, se indagan las narrativas y experiencias de estos maestros en torno a la preservación del idioma quichua en diversos espacios: la escuela, el hogar y la comunidad.

Las principales preguntas de investigación de este estudio fueron:

1. ¿Qué hacen los profesores indígenas para promover un sentido de identidad común para sus estudiantes a través del idioma quichua?
2. ¿Cómo abordan los profesores las diferencias lingüísticas en las prácticas educativas cotidianas?

Para nuestro estudio analizamos el papel de la identidad en el cambio del contexto de aprendizaje indígena, donde la revitalización de la lengua involucra la

capacidad de los docentes para identificar las contradicciones y tensiones en su entorno de enseñanza y aprendizaje.

Para este estudio, se realizaron entrevistas semiabiertas en la propia escuela *Mushuk Rimak*. Se utilizó un enfoque cualitativo, con entrevistas de una duración aproximada de 25 minutos. En algunos casos, se optó por entrevistas en profundidad siguiendo el enfoque propuesto por Flick (2012), las cuales consistieron en conversaciones flexibles y espontáneas para profundizar en temas de especial interés para la investigación. La familiaridad con la cultura indígena, su lengua, las rutinas diarias de los docentes y de la comunidad en general, así como con el contenido del estudio, fueron fundamentales para llevar a cabo las entrevistas de manera efectiva.

RESULTADOS

Los maestros y las maestras indígenas destacan varios aspectos críticos sobre la situación del quichua y la identidad cultural en el contexto educativo. En primer lugar, expresan un deseo profundo de valorar y preservar su lengua a través de la educación, lo que refleja un sentido de orgullo y pertenencia a su cultura. Sin embargo, también señalan un desafío significativo: la falta de práctica del quichua en el entorno familiar. Este punto es crucial, ya que la transmisión de una lengua a las nuevas generaciones a menudo depende de su uso cotidiano en el hogar. Sin el apoyo de las familias, el esfuerzo por revitalizar el quichua en la escuela puede verse limitado.

Los maestros y las maestras mencionan que la educación bilingüe está contribuyendo a revalorizar el quichua, lo cual es un paso positivo hacia la recuperación de la lengua y la cultura asociada. Este tipo de educación no solo proporciona a los estudiantes habilidades lingüísticas en ambas lenguas, sino que también fomenta un sentido de identidad y pertenencia, permitiendo que los jóvenes se reconozcan en su cultura indígena mientras interactúan con el mundo hispanohablante.

Cabe señalar que los participantes hacen referencias a los "profesores entusiastas" que practican el idioma y resaltan la importancia de contar con educadores comprometidos en el proceso de enseñanza del quichua. Consideran que la capacitación de los docentes en ambas lenguas es fundamental para garantizar la calidad de la educación bilingüe. La exigencia de ser bilingüe para trabajar en la educación bilingüe no solo asegura que los profesores tengan la

capacidad de enseñar eficazmente, sino que también refuerza la legitimidad y la importancia del quichua en el sistema educativo.

En la opinión de los maestros y las maestras indígenas existe una profunda conexión entre la lengua quichua y la identidad cultural de la comunidad. Como docentes intentan revitalizar una lengua que ha estado en peligro de extinción, especialmente en un contexto donde las nuevas generaciones pueden no estar familiarizadas con ella. En este esfuerzo por recuperar el idioma no solo trata de la enseñanza de vocabulario y gramática, sino de transmitir una herencia cultural rica en valores, tradiciones y cosmovisiones.

Los maestros y las maestras mencionan que el quichua es "parte de nuestro vivir", lo que subraya su importancia no solo como un medio de comunicación, sino como un elemento esencial de la identidad y la existencia diaria de la comunidad. Al describir el quichua como "parte de nuestros ancestros, de nuestra lengua", los maestros y maestras indígenas establecen un vínculo intergeneracional en el cual destacan que la lengua es un vehículo para la cultura, la historia y la conexión con las raíces originarias de su civilización. Este vínculo es vital para la formación de una identidad fuerte y coherente en las nuevas generaciones, quienes deben entender y apreciar su herencia cultural.

Al mismo tiempo, consideran que la revitalización del quichua requiere un esfuerzo sostenido. No se trata de un proyecto temporal, sino de un compromiso a largo plazo por parte de la comunidad y del sistema educativo para integrar el quichua en la vida cotidiana y en el currículo escolar. Los maestros y las maestras comentan que se necesita un rescate de "las medidas de la educación intercultural bilingüe", lo que significa que se pone de relieve la importancia de implementar políticas y prácticas educativas que reconozcan y promuevan la diversidad lingüística y cultural. La educación intercultural bilingüe no solo busca enseñar dos lenguas, sino también fomentar un diálogo entre culturas, donde el quichua no sea visto como un idioma secundario, sino como una lengua de igual valor que el español.

Los maestros y las maestras indígenas ponen de manifiesto también la compleja relación entre la lengua quichua, la educación y los efectos de la globalización en la identidad cultural y señalan una realidad fundamental: la transmisión del idioma ha sido históricamente un proceso familiar y comunitario. En su opinión, la familia es el primer agente de socialización y educación lingüística.

Otro tema que destacan es la globalización, un fenómeno que puede contribuir a la predominancia del español, a menudo visto como una lengua con más "prestigio" o valor económico. Esto puede generar una percepción de que el

quichua es menos relevante, lo que, a su vez, afecta la motivación de las familias y la comunidad para aprender y usar la lengua indígena.

Para finalizar, señalamos que, según el estudio de Chireac y Guerrero-Jiménez (2021), los docentes destacan la necesidad de crear políticas públicas que no solo reconozcan la diversidad lingüística del país, sino que también promuevan activamente el uso y la enseñanza del quichua en todos los ámbitos, incluido el educativo ya que sin un apoyo institucional sólido, los esfuerzos individuales y comunitarios de los docentes y familias indígenas por preservar y revitalizar el quichua pueden resultar insuficientes.

CONCLUSIONES

Las conclusiones del estudio subrayan una problemática profunda y multifacética relacionada con la lengua quichua y su lugar en la identidad cultural de los pueblos indígenas. La afirmación de uno de los maestros entrevistados de que existe una falta de interés por la lengua quichua como “resultado de años de opresión, discriminación y marginación” destaca un contexto histórico que ha llevado a la desvalorización de las lenguas indígenas en Ecuador y en muchos otros países de América Latina. Este proceso de opresión ha resultado en una internalización de la idea de que el quichua es inferior al español, creando un ciclo de desconfianza y desinterés hacia el idioma.

La percepción de que el quichua no presenta para los hijos de los indígenas una vía para ascender y obtener cierto prestigio en la sociedad refleja una realidad socioeconómica en la que el dominio del español se ha asociado con mayores oportunidades laborales, educativas y sociales. Esta creencia ha llevado a las familias a priorizar la enseñanza del español sobre la del quichua, considerando que la lengua indígena no les proporcionará las mismas ventajas que el idioma dominante. La idea de que el español es el único vehículo para el ascenso social refuerza la discriminación y la marginalización, perpetuando la desigualdad entre las comunidades indígenas y el resto de la sociedad (Canuto, 2017).

En el ámbito escolar se llevaron a cabo estudios como el de Chireac y Francis (2018) quienes analizaron la situación de la alfabetización en la comunidad rural de San Lucas, un aspecto clave para entender el tema de la identidad hacia las lenguas en contacto. Los resultados indican que se ha alcanzado la paridad de género en el desempeño de alfabetización. Esto sugiere que no solo se ha logrado una representación equitativa en las aulas, sino que las niñas y los niños están alcanzando niveles similares de habilidad en lectura y escritura. Esta conclusión es

alentadora, ya que implica que las políticas educativas están teniendo un impacto positivo en la igualdad de género en la educación. Si se confirma la hipótesis de que existe paridad en la alfabetización entre géneros en otras comunidades rurales, esto podría influir en futuras políticas educativas, enfatizando la necesidad de continuar invirtiendo en recursos y programas que fomenten la igualdad de oportunidades. Además, podría servir como un modelo a seguir para otras regiones en América Latina, promoviendo prácticas educativas que aseguren la igualdad en la educación.

Por otro lado, el hecho de que las familias valoran la lengua únicamente a partir de la herencia de sus antepasados indica una apreciación de la cultura quichua que, sin embargo, se limita a una visión nostálgica o simbólica. Este enfoque puede implicar un reconocimiento de la importancia histórica del quichua, pero no se traduce en una acción concreta para mantener y transmitir la lengua a las nuevas generaciones. La decisión de no perpetuar la lengua y la cultura puede estar influenciada por la falta de modelos positivos que validen el uso del quichua en la vida cotidiana y en las instituciones.

Además, estas conclusiones sugieren una crisis de identidad entre los jóvenes de estas comunidades, quienes pueden sentirse atrapados entre la cultura dominante y su propia herencia cultural. Sin una educación que valore y promueva activamente el quichua, es probable que los jóvenes se distancien aún más de su lengua y cultura, lo que, a su vez, pone en riesgo la supervivencia del idioma.

Para abordar esta situación, es crucial que se implementen políticas educativas que no solo reconozcan la importancia del quichua, sino que también fomenten un cambio de percepción sobre su valor en la sociedad. Esto podría incluir programas de educación intercultural bilingüe que demuestren el prestigio y la relevancia del quichua en un contexto moderno, integrando la lengua en la vida cotidiana de manera significativa y práctica.

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Building Transversal Skills with Art English

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Abstract: The unprecedented speed at which changes happen in our lives, specifically in our professional lives, has made it apparent that we all need to adjust and adapt to the realities around us continuously. In every occupational field, ever-growing professional communication demands challenge recruiters, possible employees, and the already employed. Linguistic and nonlinguistic skills must converge to manage and face competitiveness. E.S.P. teaching has to encompass the complexity of the labor market demands to help students deal with all these challenges and efficiently function in this new and permanently changing world. The present paper focuses on the significant task that the ESP teaching has in building transversal/transferable skills. Several aspects are considered, such as content language teaching, corpus studies for teaching purposes, operating with specialized lexis, devising the most appropriate teaching materials, finding and using the most efficient online materials and practices, effectively practicing reading and listening comprehension skills in specialized contexts, that can be transferred whenever media and information literacy is involved (e.g., being able to locate and access information, to analyze and evaluate diverse media content), teaching writing for specialized purposes skills that can be adapted whenever the purposes change, developing effective and adaptable rhetorical means, facilitating critical and innovative thinking, building genre literacy (especially in the online context including multimodal literacy), building intercultural understanding and managing global citizenship, etc. The paper analyzes several methodologies, practices, and results of teaching English for Art Purposes along with the above coordinates and considers some revisions. The whole E.S.P. endeavor needs to be targeted at the students' needs to function not just in the current academic environment but also in their possible future jobs and to build successful professional careers.

Keywords: *E.S.P., language skills, transversal/transferable skills, adjust and adapt*

INTRODUCTION

According to the UNESCO IBE *Glossary of Curriculum-related Terminology* (2013), transversal skills² are those skills that, without being subscribed to a specific area of knowledge (academic discipline, job, task), are fundamental for functioning in various situations and work settings. In other words, these are skills without

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² Other terms used for these skills are *21st-century skills, soft skills, higher-order skills, non-academic skills, non-cognitive skills, generic skills, 'basic,' 'oblique,' 'socio-emotional or 'core' skills.*

which we cannot function in the contemporary world because they offer the instruments to adapt to changes and "lead meaningful, productive lives." (UNESCO_UNEVOC, 2013). They include critical and innovative thinking, inter- and intra-personal skills, global citizenship, and media and information literacy

Any person should be able to think critically and build informed opinions based on which to act further; this is a prerequisite to functioning in increasingly demanding social, academic, and work contexts. After gathering and synthesizing enough information from trustworthy sources and analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting it, one can build a correct and complex understanding of the world and its complicated social, economic, and power relations. Critical thinking opens our minds in the face of stereotypes and manipulation attempts. A critical thinker cannot be easily misled into accepting ideas and facts contrary to their informed opinions. (Great Schools Partnership, 2013 & Council of Europe, 2020)

Building and managing interpersonal skills presuppose an excellent command of verbal and nonverbal strategies of effective communication and organizational skills involving goal setting, teamwork, strategic and analytic thinking (attention to detail, decision making, planning), and time management (meeting deadlines). Intrapersonal skills support and add value to the former: self-discipline, self-motivation (even when working under pressure), enthusiasm, and perseverance in performing tasks.

In a world where advanced communication technologies allow people to reach one another no matter how far they might be geographically, yet in a world troubled by so many conflicts of all types, by wars, global citizenship education proves a necessity. UNESCO places it at a high rank in a 2030 perspective on global education, numbered as *S.D.G. target 4.7*. of the United Nations Organization (U.N.O.) 2030 agenda of sustainable development goals (17 in all, of which number 4 refers to access to inclusive and equitable quality education as well as to lifelong learning opportunities for all) (U.N.O., 2015). A global citizen should possess such attributes as tolerance, openness to and understanding of other cultures, respect for diversity, and such skills and competences that should enable them to act collaboratively to find global solutions to global challenges and strive for the collective good (including human rights, gender equality), promote a culture of peace and non-violence. (U.N.O. 2015, Sustainable Development Goals, 4.7.³)

Another essential set of transversal skills any person should possess is related to media and information literacy: "the ability to locate and access information, as well as to analyze and evaluate media content" (UNESCO, 2014, p.2). Specifically,

³ Goal 4, paragraph 7

one should be able to collect data, process it using computer technologies, analyze and interpret it by deploying critical thinking mechanisms, and use it efficiently and ethically. The ability to learn and work online in a blended environment is closely related to this set of skills.

ESCO (European Skills, Competences, and Occupations), as part of the Europe 2020 strategy in education, also mentions the importance of providing learners with a complete set of transversal skills and competences. These are core skills, thinking skills and competences, self-management skills and competences, physical and manual skills, and life skills and competences (CEDEFOP, 2021). The three core (or essential) skills any European citizen should be endowed with, therefore taught, are mastering languages, working with numbers and measures, and working with digital devices and applications.

The core skills come close and sometimes overlap with the key competence devised by the Council of the European Union in 2018 concerning the lifelong learning strategy. The set of eight competences established for life-long learning for European citizens consists of literacy competence, multilingual competence, mathematical competence and competence in science, technology, and engineering, digital competence, personal, social, and learning-to-learn competence, citizenship competence, entrepreneurship competence, and the cultural awareness and expression competence. The school years (up to higher education) establish the grounds for a life-long learning process of enriching and improving the above set.

Another term used concerning the ones above is transferable skills. They refer to specific "knowledge, know-how, abilities and attitudes that an individual can use across jobs and across his/her career and education or training path" (CEDEFOP, 2021) and include both transversal skills and specific job-related skills.

A white paper published by the education researcher Simon Whitemore in 2018 focuses on seven of the core transversal skills necessary to adapt to the changing work contexts, especially in the digital era: collaborative problem-solving; learning to learn, continuing to learn; digital competencies and mindset; initiative and independent thinking; resilience; adaptability; cultural awareness and expression (Whitemore, 2018, p. 5). Although this report (paper) addresses organizations, leaders, and managers, teachers may find important clues for future educational purposes. Surviving and thriving in these new, ever-changing economies and workplaces is directly related to mastering the core transversal skills. Education needs to do more in this respect. Therefore, individuals need to somehow appropriate them. While transcending knowledge and skills, transversal competences are characterized by such features as high transferability "across

domains, geographies, work and life contexts" (Whitemore, 2018, p. 9) and involvement of social and personal relations; they are cross-functional and cross-curricular (therefore subject and object of blended learning); they necessarily involve quality communication (avoiding vagueness); they are essential tools for changing and adapting; they can be assessed and developed with some difficulty and always interactively by implying self-awareness and self-knowledge (Whitemore, 2018, p. 9). Education needs to change from transferring only knowledge and cognitive and technical skills to becoming a lifelong learning provider and endowing students with the best instruments (soft and transversal skills) to use throughout their entire (professional) lives. Self-directed e-learning may prove reliable in this respect. The World Economic Forum, New Vision for Education (2016) recommends such learning strategies as "game-playing, fostering and nurturing relationships, feeding curiosity and allowing discovery, breaking learning into smaller, bite-sized pieces [...], providing challenges, developing a growth mindset" (Whitemore, 2018, p. 41.)

TRANSVERSAL SKILLS IN AN ACADEMIC CONTEXT

Education, at all levels, is called upon to help students reach high standard achievements in general knowledge, specialized knowledge, and a wide range of skills facilitating learning and functioning in contemporary society. The necessity of possessing such transversal skills comes from our world's realities. Globalization is a phenomenon people need to adapt to. Global employers need employees who can understand the global markets and adapt to the diverse practices and regulations, can communicate across cultures using different languages, can efficiently use the newest technologies, think critically and creatively, make the best decisions, join interdisciplinary teams, people who can permanently adapt to any new or changing contexts, demands, sets of values, etc.

Learning is nowadays understood as a lifelong human activity. It continues once school years end. This year, the U.N.O. Special Event on Transforming Education, convened by the U.N. Secretary-General in collaboration with the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council, held on July 11, focuses on two crucial aspects: the financing of education to secure more and better investment in this domain (as a long-term investment in a country's future) and on embracing a new vision for the creation of learning societies:

[...] to ensure education better serves as a foundation for peace, human rights and opportunity for all, and that societies are better equipped to navigate rapid economic and societal shifts, spurred by new and emerging technologies, the triple planetary crisis and a weakening of the social contract. Learning societies require governments to move away from the traditional static, siloed vision of education and to progressively build adaptable and effective lifelong learning systems. They also call for a learning environment that pursues radical inclusion, a fresh national and global consensus around the knowledge, skills, mindsets and capacities needed for the world today, a repositioning of the role of teachers in the learning process and the harnessing of digital tools and resources for better education access, experience and outcomes. (U.N.O., 2024, p. 2)

Therefore, education, teachers, in general, are expected to play an essential part in creating "learning societies."

As part of higher education curricula, E.S.P. has to assume an important role in preparing students for their future careers and endowing them with the best possible skills. If the professional ones are the responsibility of the respective specializations, the transversal skills may be easily conceived as part of the E.S.P. teacher's responsibility.

Different E.S.P. practices deal with transversal and transferable skills. Csoupková and Dlabolová (2022) teach E.S.P. at the Faculty of Science of Masaryk University. Their course's approach is to propose to students some "concrete tasks building up the employability skills, such as writing a CV, cover letter, conducting job interview simulations and presenting a research project" (Csoupková et al., 2022, p. 183). Nonetheless, more general communication skills such as argumentation, negotiation, and planning are considered. Specifically, they focus on peer-feedback skills, as part of the academic experience as well as the students' future job environments, on mediating meaning (explaining, using subject-specific vocabulary, working with definitions, comparing, etc.), and on verbalizing own skills and achievements (by using such documents/genres as CV, cover letter, conducting mock job interviews). The two authors highlight the importance of these skills for their students' employability.

Polyakova and Galstyan-Sargsyan (2020) extensively studied the role of higher education in providing students with transversal skills that will help them adapt to their future jobs and cope with whatever challenges they may face. In their understanding "the transversal competence is the ability of a student to use cognitive capacities and applied skills to address daily study and work routines successfully" (p. 16). It ranges from hard (data and administrative skills) to soft (behavioral) skills. (p. 16) Based on a needs and preferences survey they conducted on their engineering students, they considered a change of their E.S.P. courses to "agglutinate" communicative and transversal competences. For example, an activity

focusing on vocabulary would include communicative B2 competencies such as Reading (Travel and transport specific vocabulary), Writing (Exercises A and B), Speaking, listening (Exercise C), as well as transversal competences such as Application and practical thinking and Effective communication (Polyakova et al., 2020, p. 22). They also devise some markers and descriptors for the transversal competences to assess their students' achievements.

In their conference paper, Belchior Rocha et al. (2017) notice that, in the context of the Bologna process of education, universities have been challenged to narrow the gap between higher education and the labor market. Implementing a transversal competences program, especially for first-cycle students, is an essential step. The paper's authors mention a core study of a pilot project (called *Tuning Educational Structures in Europe*, 2003) involving many academics, students, and entrepreneurs from various European countries whose opinions on what transversal competences the future employees should possess converged. They were as follows:

"ability to analyze and synthesize; ability to learn; ability to solve problems; ability to apply knowledge; ability to adapt to new situations; concern about quality; ability to work with information; ability to work independently and in groups" (Belchior et al., 2017, p. 4157).

The authors of the report (González, & Wagenaar, 2003, cited in Belchior Rocha et al., 2017) considered grouping the transversal and transferable competences into three main types:

Instrumental skills: cognitive, methodological, technological and linguistic abilities;
Interpersonal skills: individual skills such as social skills (social interaction and cooperation);
Systemic skills: skills and competences related to the whole system (a combination of understanding, sensitivity, and knowledge that allow the individual to see how the parts of a whole relate and group together). (p. 4158)

Portuguese public universities have implemented the skills mentioned above since 2009-2010 as a new structure called The Laboratory of Transversal Skills (L.T.S.), later becoming the Laboratory of Languages and Transversal Skills (LLTS). The new structure's purpose is to develop a curriculum and courses and provide the necessary operating tools, logistics, and pedagogy across the different study areas. The authors of the paper have researched how the academic staff was involved in developing the transversal competences, over six academic years. They devised a profile of such a person: the teacher should value diversity, be flexible and practical, use the methodologies best suited for diverse study groups, be

empathic with students' needs, and use suitable language. The research aimed to see what differentiates a teacher of transversal competences when teaching, learning (social, emotional, and academic), and evaluating the students. The authors conclude that a transversal competence teacher must be a reflexive professional, an agent of own formation and students' formation, and an inspired mediator helping students construct knowledge through "playful, reflexive, challenging, and creative activities." Such a teacher enables students to become active, autonomous, and critical subjects of their own growth. (p. 4162)

Although it is unclear what training the transversal competence teacher has (or should have), the language teacher is an integral part of the process. It is also clear that such a teacher must be a good psychologist and educator and possess the respective skills.

In their 2018 essay on the subject of transversal competences (*Transversal Competences: Their Importance and Learning Processes by Higher Education Students*), Maria José Sá and Sandro Serpa notice that following the 1999 Bologna Declaration, European higher education institutions have worked to change and adapt their curricula and programs to respond to the labor market. A significant preoccupation became equipping their students with transferable competences, enabling them to apply their knowledge in various professional areas. Employability has become a central principle for what higher education needs to offer. Excessive theory is constantly making room for more practice. However, there is still a gap between the perceptions of employers and higher education institutions concerning the ratio of scientific content and practical needs (José Sá et al., 2018, p. 2). The solution seems to be building the necessary competences in the graduates, although the acceptations and definitions of the term are pretty varied. The two authors distinguish two main types of competences directly related to the labor market: a set of general or transversal competences that are helpful in all fields and for all tasks and, therefore, transferable (e.g., leadership, communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and creativity competences, digital ones), and specific or technical competences, which cannot be transferred to other contexts (José Sá et al., 2018, p. 3). Although such skills may be taught and developed in practice along with scientific and technical ones, the present-day education standards call for a life-long learning approach. Transversal competences have become standards for the accreditation of higher education institutions and programs by national and international agencies, and to meet the standards, curricula, and syllabi had to change and adapt. Teachers had to adapt and become experts, consultants, mediators, moderators, and enablers in developing transversal student competences (José Sá et al., 2018, p. 5). The newer tendencies ascribe students to a more active role and involve the use of new technologies and forms of assessment.

Discrepancies between the perception of the importance of some transversal competences have been reported; that is, students consider some competences to be valuable (e.g., decision-making, problem-solving) while employers value others (communication skills, use of digital technologies), hence the necessity to bring together all the actors involved in the matter: students, teachers, institutional leaders and employers to clearly define and assess the value of the transversal competences to be developed in the higher education context (José Sá et al., 2018, p. 6). Possible solutions may come from an adaptation of the pedagogical methodologies to combine scientific and technical knowledge with the work environments; for example, students may be asked to actively engage in simulated work-based projects (which should include such transversal skills as teamwork, problem-solving, acceptance of different perspectives and critical analysis) (José Sá et al., 2018, p. 6). Digital technologies proved successful when students could obtain content knowledge by actively and critically engaging in the virtual context, considered an essential transversal skill of the 21st century.

Assessing transversal competences may be challenging. However, it is accepted that the utmost criteria should concern students' ability to integrate diverse knowledge and use it in an applied manner; this way, the assessment may become a formative factor in the development of those competences, and students may be actively involved (José Sá et al., 2018, p. 8).

TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES AND ART EDUCATION STANDARDS

In the Romanian context of higher education, an essential factor in establishing the quality of higher education institutions and accrediting them is ARACIS (Agenția Română de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Superior/The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education). It establishes the standards for all the branches and programs of Romanian higher education institutions. Commission no. 8 is responsible for the arts, architecture and urbanism, physical education, and sport. The standards imposed at a B.A. level for the visual arts domain (ARACIS, 2023) concern the content of the curriculum, which should include certain fundamental (core) subjects, domain-specific subjects (pertaining to the different art branches: painting, photography, fashion, etc.), specialized subjects (sacred art-painting, sacred art-conservation and restoration), and complementary disciplines; the respective disciplines may be compulsory, elective (students can choose between several subjects) and optional (students can choose them or not; they are not mandatory).

The complementary subjects are considered indispensable for the formation of visual arts graduates. They are meant to ensure the transversal competences

(ARACIS, 2023, p.39). The complementary subjects consist of foreign languages, whereas other subjects are physical education, computer technology, digital editing and processing (of text, image, multimedia), sociology/axiology, art pedagogy, and digital education. Unlike the previous set of standards, the new one places the teaching-learning of foreign languages among the compulsory complementary subjects (with physical education and computer technology) (ARACIS, 2023, p.40).

This is a signal that the Agency adapted the standards and requirements to the present-day tendencies in higher education and to the necessity of gapping the relation with the labour market. Quite interestingly, though, when considering the research the teachers should perform, a particular link to the domain is required, except for physical education and foreign language teachers (ARACIS, 2023, p. 47). The respective commission may not be familiar with the specialized languages branch and the existence of such specialized language/s departments in higher education.

The visual arts graduate students are supposed to own the knowledge, competences, and abilities which should enable them to function in the labor market, to get employed, or be freelancers, to develop a personal business, creative projects (as individual artists or in groups), or to further their studies (and get an M.A. or doctoral degree). The commission requires that all these competencies be clearly defined and distinctly mentioned in each program's curriculum (ARACIS, 2023, p.42). Furthermore, each syllabus should also mention the exact competences the respective discipline develops. They should appear on the diploma supplement of each graduate student (thing which should facilitate the relation with the labor market). These competences are also listed in the A.N.C. (Autoritatea Națională pentru Calificări) (N.Q.A./National Qualifications Authority) framework documents (RNCIS = Registrul național al calificărilor din învățământul superior / National Qualifications Register), in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework and allow graduates to profess according to the COR (Clasificarea ocupațiilor din România / Classification of occupations in Romania and ESCO (European Skills, Competences, and Occupations) nomenclatures.

ESCO aims to support job mobility across Europe and, therefore, a more integrated and efficient labor market by offering a "common language" on occupations and skills that can be used by different stakeholders on employment and education and training topics. (<https://esco.ec.europa.eu/en/about-esco/what-esco>, accessed July 12, 2024)

According to the respective documents, a visual arts graduate is supposed to possess specific knowledge, skills, and competences. Below are some examples of the necessary skills and competences required by occupations in the art field; the underlined ones may be appropriated by the ESP course:

Painter - ESCO code 2651.1

- contextualize artistic work
- create artwork
- create original drawings
- create original paintings
- create sketches
- define artistic approach
- develop visual elements
- gather reference materials for the artwork
- maintain an artistic (!)
- monitor art scene developments
- select artistic materials to create artworks
- study artistic techniques
- use artistic materials for drawing
- use genre painting techniques
- use painting techniques
- autonomous management of professional tasks involving creativity and innovation in the field of visual arts.
- the ability to meet deadlines, work in teams, as well as independently, demonstrating creativity, flexibility, and adaptability in completing tasks.

Conceptual artist - ESCO code 2651.5

- adapts the artistic concept to the location
- contextualise artistic work

The history and theory of art graduate:

- plans artistic education activities
- establishes educational networks
- develops training plans for promotion and information activities
- lays the foundations for educational resources
- respects cultural differences in terms of exhibitions
- works independently on the preparation and organization of exhibitions
- records the museum collection
- offers advice on art objects for exhibitions
- evaluate historical documents
- contextualizes the collection of records
- writes scientific publications
- studies a collection
- carries out scientific research
- evaluates research activities
- disseminates the results among the scientific community
- requests funding for research
- presents the results of the analyses
- promotes knowledge transfer

- create artwork
- define artistic approach
- develop artistic research framework
- discuss artwork
- gather reference materials for the artwork
- maintain an artistic portfolio
- make artistic process explicit
- monitor art scene developments
- select artistic materials to create artworks
- study artistic techniques
- capacity for ethnic and intercultural understanding, tolerance, respect for diversity, as well as for national, European/ international values and laws.

"Art Exhibition Curator - ESCO code 2621.6

- works independently on the preparation and organization of exhibitions
- provides information about the exhibition theme
- organizes an exhibition
- presents exhibitions
- interacts with the public

Cultural Center Visitor Services Manager - ESCO code 2621.5

- promotes events organized by a cultural institution

- manages open publications
- manages personal professional development
- gives lectures
- writes scientific, academic works and technical documentation
- interacts professionally in research and professional environments
- promotes public involvement in research
- prepares the exhibition program
- carries out research activities at an interdisciplinary level
- develops professional networks with researchers
- monitors artistic activities
- interacts with the public
- presents exhibitions
- implements the management of the project
- advertises an art collection
- evaluates the quality of art objects
- creates new concepts
- organizes an exhibition

"Professional competences:

Figure 1. Skills and competences required by occupations in the art field.

Source: <https://www.anc.edu.ro/vizcalificare/?prog=25213>

TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES AND THEIR PRACTICE (AT U.A.D.¹)

The implementation of such detailed standard requirements in the art higher education called for a rethinking of the whole process, starting with adapting curricula and syllabi to specifically include the respective knowledge, skills, and competences. Each program revised the curriculum to comply. For example, the History and Theory of Art program's curriculum mentions the following professional competences: recognizing artworks (style, period, author), describing artworks (distinguishing formal elements), critically analyzing artworks, creating theoretical syntheses, interpreting artworks, judging (evaluating/appreciating) artworks; understanding traditional and modern paradigms of creation; mediating between artworks, artists, and the public. Transversal competencies include working rigorously, efficiently, and responsibly; punctuality; assuming responsibility; identifying a personal role in a multi-specialized team; using the best opportunities and tools for permanent learning and development (lifelong learning).

ART ENGLISH AND TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES

The necessity of adapting the syllabus became obvious to comply with the new tendencies and try to fill the gap between higher education practices and labor market requirements. What skills can be improved, and which are the best instruments to do that? What is students' perception of the knowledge and transversal skills they are supposed to possess upon graduation? What are their expectations?

The core transversal competence the language teacher can help students with concerns the ability to communicate. This needs to be put in a certain perspective. What (about) to communicate, in what context(s), to what end? Indeed, artists communicate differently: they use the plastic discourse to express ideas, feelings, attitudes, etc. However, the labor market places a strong emphasis on this transversal competence. In order to function on such a complex market (on the art market as well), an artist, an art professional needs to efficiently communicate. International markets use English as a universal means of communication.

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International markets use digital communication in English, too. Art graduates will likely use this language to function in those markets.

A closer view of the listed competences mentioned before made it possible to select those involving communication. Among them, defining artistic approach, discussing artwork, organizing, presenting exhibitions, interacting with the public, disseminating research results, writing research papers and technical documentation, giving lectures, advertising, and creating exhibition materials may well be using English, especially internationally. Artistic creation, academic research, and the art business can only be conceived considering the international context.

The best approach to achieve these goals was to adapt genre analysis practices to the art discourse, that is, to choose the genres best suited for achieving the respective goals. For example, to "define artistic approach," students were exposed to the genre of the artist statement and designer concept statement. Several such texts were studied so that they could recognize the structure (moves, steps) of the genre and possible discourse strategies (rhetorical devices) and imagine what they would say/write about themselves as creators of art. Then, several contexts were considered for which they would use such a text. Simulating a life situation in which they would use the text, they were asked to write or speak their statements. The best way to do it was to use computer technology (which they are expected to). They would use computer programs to write and edit their texts, use images, and create videos using multimedia tools (images and sound) to speak about their approach to art/design as creators.

To "discuss an artwork", the genre of the formal analysis seemed most appropriate. Starting from particular texts analyzing artworks (classical and student texts), a particular structure was distinguished, and specific strategies were recognized. That is, a work of art is firstly "deconstructed" in relevant elements which are described by using specific language tools (nouns and lots of adjectives, mainly); then particular meanings are attributed to each element (using verbs of suggestion); then the whole is re-created and given a meaning. Sometimes evaluations are included (such as style attribution and value, e.g., a masterpiece). After understanding the mechanism of analysing artworks, students are encouraged to analyse works of their choice, even their colleagues'. The important thing is to work with the communicative mechanism of the genre.

Exhibition materials need to be conceived in English as well. Labels, leaflets, cards, and reviews are genres directly related to gallery and museum exhibitions. They are also means to connect with the art public. The same steps were taken,

starting from particular examples of such texts, discussing genre features and communicative strategies, the students (especially those of the art history and theory program) were asked to produce their own texts, in writing and speaking (as videos or podcasts) and place them on their websites or blogs accompanied by multimedia tools.

Disseminating research results by writing a research paper is something any graduate student needs to do. They should write a B.A. paper, an M.A. dissertation, or a doctoral thesis/dissertation (even the artists), which should result from the (artistic) research they conducted during their academic study years. Writing a research paper is usually a difficult task. It will likely not be written in English (so far). However, the Art English course also includes this genre to help them understand how it works and especially help them see the difference between a research paper and an essay (which is quite confusing for them). Although the time is too short to go into the details of writing such a paper, some examples of shorter research papers are discussed, and the typical genre features are stressed. The objectivity of the writing, assuming the voice of authority, structuring, acknowledging the sources -notes, references, bibliography, quoting, paraphrasing, and especially avoiding plagiarism. They need to understand the rigor of the genre compared to other genres.

Besides offering the students the necessary knowledge of the genre, another important transversal competence is involved: finding and selecting the necessary information, that is, working with sources (usually from the Internet) and critically thinking about the information they offer. Then, an informed selection of the best data is the starting point of each research. The sources they will find are vast and in English. Knowing how to find and use digital information is a transversal competence without which no one can function today (digital literacy). Deciding whether a source is good or not, appropriate to your goals, trustworthy or not involves critical thinking. Experience helps, and it can be built. Comparing different sources is the first step in deciding what to choose. During the academic year, students are asked to access many texts on the Internet. Reading and listening comprehension exercises are the first step to understanding what they accessed. Understanding requires much practice but enables one to function consciously and work with that information efficiently (and avoid remaining functionally illiterate). English is, therefore, an instrument without which they will not be able to find the right information and use it according to their purposes. This is why, during the first year, the students will mainly work towards acquiring the best reading and

listening competencies and building a specialized vocabulary they will need in their academic and professional lives.

Another exercise meant to help students acquire and develop the ability to find the best information is to ask them to find information on a specific subject or gather reference materials (e.g., Romantic features of Turner's art). They are asked to note down (like a kind of list) items of information from different sources (including their suggested references and/or given bibliography). Then, the pieces of information are compared, and decisions are made about what exact information is correct and which is false or incorrect. Then, another list is made, converging all the selected sources. The subjects may be chosen according to student's needs and interests concerning other disciplines.

Monitoring the art scene obviously implies the use of a foreign language. Since the vast majority of information is to be found written in English (sometimes translated from other languages), students need to be able to use it to find what happens in the art world. They may want to see what is new on the New York art scene, what a museum decided to exhibit as a new exhibition, who the winners of art contests are and why, etc. Surveying the Internet for this purpose is the most handy tool to stay up-to-date as an art professional.

Another valued transversal competence, not directly related to a language course but essential for the Art English course, is time management and respecting deadlines. All the proposed tasks have well-established deadlines (although quite generous). It appears that art students need to practice this skill. No student work is accepted after the deadline, and they must suffer the consequences. Today's world is also about timing, scheduling, and respecting deadlines; any workplace will require such things (even freelancers need to adapt to survive).

Most importantly, since the Art English course is an online one, students are invited to learn and work in a digital medium, to use digital tools to learn, to manage tasks, complete assignments, all of these at their own pace but within certain deadlines; this will certainly help them throughout their entire (professional) active lives, setting the stage for what is now called lifelong learning.

The assessment of the transversal competences is necessarily combined with the assessment of language competencies. The stress lies on the practical part. For example, they are asked to build their blogs or websites, written in English, where they are expected to post such materials as an artist statement, a video CV, an art review, present a work-in-progress, share a personal experience with visiting a museum or gallery, comment on some information of interest, or opinions expressed by other art professionals, etc. Besides assessing the quality of the

language they use, how they manage to communicate efficiently on subjects of professional interest and how the communicative purposes are achieved are equally important aspects. Creativity in achieving those goals is also valued, as is the use of multimodality. Without necessarily acknowledging it, students become digital content creators as well. Online collaboration is also encouraged. They are encouraged to comment (in English) on their colleagues' or other artists' posts (in English) on Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook, or X. By communicating with people all over the world, they take steps towards becoming global citizens.

CONCLUSION

We are living in quite challenging times: everything changes at never-before-imagined paces. We all need to adapt. Our students must function in this new world and adapt to the demands of the new society and labor markets. Art professionals also have to meet an extremely tough, still volatile, art market.

As The Committee on Employment and Social Policy of I.L.O. (International Labour Organization) made it clear back in 2007,

Education and training policies must be better integrated into major policy frameworks and development strategies; such strategies include integrating transferable skills into curricula, developing effective training methods, promoting investment in transferable skills, and designing forward-looking skills development strategies (International Labour Office, 2007, p. 16).

These transversal skills need to be portable and recognized, and each National Occupational Framework needs to specify them with clarity, an ongoing activity for our labor ministry. Universities' role in this bigger picture is growing, and their awareness is essential. The approach to higher education teaching itself needs to change from pure theory and adapt to provide students with real opportunities to develop transversal skills necessary for their future successful careers.

In this context, the challenges of the Art English course are numerous. They start with detecting the transversal skills the students are expected to master upon graduation and finding the best ways to integrate the respective transversal skills as the usual practice for learning and assessment.

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Growth Mindset and Enhancing Motivation in Students' Spoken Interactions

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Abstract: Roughly two decades ago, world-renowned psychologist Carol S. Dweck coined the concept of mindset. The brilliant book published in the early 2000s was not by chance entitled *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. The author's lifelong research had resulted in a groundbreaking theory that was going to influence the future generations in very different areas of expertise, encompassing the educational environment, the business world, the sports or the arts field etc. With regard to language learning, growth mindset is linked to the drive to improve one's language skills by choosing challenging tasks, employing adaptive strategies to improve one's abilities and last but not least, not being afraid to fail. These are exactly the challenges that teachers of foreign languages are faced with especially when it comes to the students' verbal interactions. The current study aims to showcase how increasing growth mindsets among students and employing various motivation strategies result in an outstanding boost in their communication skills. This will strongly and positively impact their future communicative acts as well as their self-confidence and their desire to engage in conversation. In today's fast-paced society, these are core features for future employees.

Keywords: *growth mindset, motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, spoken communication*

INTRODUCTION

We encountered the concept of a growth mindset several years ago, and what immediately stood out to us was the significance of the word "yet". For a student, it can be immensely reassuring to understand that they have not failed an exam, but rather that they have not passed yet. This distinction goes beyond mere rephrasing; it embodies the essence of a growth mindset, i.e. they empower us to make positive changes in our lives starting from the assumption that human qualities or intelligence are not carved in stone, they can be cultivated through effort (Dweck, 2006, p. 11).

Our interest in mindsets was sparked when we first read Carol Dweck's book, the researcher who coined the concept several decades ago. It became the starting

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point of a yearslong research about how we can improve our students' academic achievements by fostering a growth mindset. The on-average claim was that implementing the aforementioned concept could turn all students into high achievers. As thoroughly analysed in the following pages, fostering a growth mindset represents just one of the elements needed in order to become academically successful. It also takes perseverance, resilience, tenacity and grit.

Do people with this [growth] mindset believe that anyone can be anything, that anyone with proper motivation or education can become Einstein or Beethoven? No, but they believe that a person's true potential is unknown (and unknowable); that it's impossible to foresee what can be accomplished with years of passion, toil, and training" (Dweck, 2006, p. 13).

In fact, there is a network of several other concepts that can't be overlooked and that converge into a broader framework that has the potential to enable teachers to have more motivated, engaged and proficient students. Thus, a strong correlation surfaced between mindset and motivation, self-efficacy and last but not least, enjoyment. Consistent research had been conducted in the past decades in terms of mindsets, but there were moderately few studies on language learning mindset in applied linguistics and that became the underlying motivation of the current article.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND ON THE CONCEPT OF *MINDSET*

Mindsets were born as a result of Dweck's research into the concept of *ability*. "We realized that there were two meanings to ability, not one: a fixed ability that needs to be proven, and a changeable ability that can be developed through learning" (Dweck, 2006, p. 17). Consequently, people with *fixed mindsets* feel the need to prove themselves over and over again. Focusing on their permanent traits, they become afraid of challenge and devalue effort. They constantly need validation as they see themselves as superior and special human beings. Conversely, people characterized by *growth mindsets* "don't just seek challenge, they thrive on it" (Dweck, 2006, p. 20). They are driven by the belief that they can change and grow through application and experience. They have a passion for learning and they love what they do even in the face of difficulties. The fixed mind setters are interested in feedback only when it reflects on their ability, while growth mind setters are open to be confronted with accurate information about their current abilities, even if it's not flattering but they know that these skills can be improved upon.

According to one's own prevailing mindset, *success* is conceived differently. In a fixed mindset, success means proving you are smart or talented and effort is

not necessary. On the contrary, if one has to make an effort to complete a given task, this shows precisely a lack of talent. This is why when failing, a fixed mind setter will try to assign blame and make excuses. In a growth mindset, success is perceived as “stretching yourself to learn something new” (Dweck, 2006, p. 17) while effort is what makes you smart or talented. If “failure has been transformed from an action (I failed) to an identity (I am a failure)” (Dweck, 2006, p. 26) in a fixed mindset context, for growth mind setters’ failure can be a painful experience, but they don’t feel defined by it. “It’s a problem to be faced, dealt with and learned from” (Dweck, 2006, p. 27).

Even in terms of the actual *process of learning*, the two ways of thinking differ substantially. Personal development is hindered if not even stifled in a fixed mindset while it represents a goal in itself in a growth mindset. In one case, learning occurs through memorizing, learning by heart. Understanding the concepts to be learned is not a must. For a growth mind setter instead, the goal of studying is to actually learn something new, it’s not just meant to pass a test. Learning means going over and over again the things one didn’t understand until they do.

To sum things up, mindset applied to the specific field of language learning refers to the beliefs about language learners’ attributes that are related to their abilities or intelligence, of which students with fixed mindset believe that their abilities or intelligence could not be changed while those with a growth mindset have malleable abilities or intelligence (Blackwell et al., 2007; Dweck, 2006; Bernecker & Job, 2019; Lou & Noels, 2019).

The fixed mindset limits achievement. It fills people’s minds with interfering thoughts, it makes effort disagreeable, and it leads to inferior learning strategies. (...) important achievements require a clear focus, all-out effort, and a bottomless trunk full of strategies (Dweck, 2006, p. 44).

TEACHERS’ INVOLVEMENT AND STRATEGIES TO FOSTER A GROWTH MINDSET

Mindsets play an important role in one’s personality but they can be changed. Individuals are usually characterized by a mixture of the two types of mindsets, but just by being informed about them one can think and react in new ways. More and more studies emphasise the need for teachers to raise students’ awareness in this regard and consequently to improve school results through teaching growth mindset strategies. According to a survey conducted and published in the

Stanford Report² by Stanford University within The Project for Education Research That Scales (PERTS) if properly and explicitly taught about mindsets, the results will be better compared to students who don't receive the same explicit instruction.

But the first step teachers have to take is to create an environment where students aren't afraid to fail. They have to provide and maintain a nurturing atmosphere, warm and accepting, an atmosphere of affection. A very strict and disciplined one, but a loving one. They have to deeply commit to them as students but also as people. "Challenge and nurture" as Dweck (2006, p. 114) describes the approach to teaching of Dorothy DeLay, the famous violin teacher.

The traditional dynamics of the education system forces teachers to focus on the curriculum instead of the whole student. In fact, stress is laid on teaching the syllabus, testing and assessing outcomes. Giving students the opportunity to gain and mature practical skills while simultaneously providing content information, is difficult and time-consuming. The same holds true in terms of evaluation. When designing the syllabus, we comprise continuous assessment throughout the semester, but unfortunately written tests still prevail.

Thus, we are sending fixed-mindset messaging to learners. Instead, what great teachers do is teach students *how* to reach the high standards. Taking Jaime Escalante's example, we should ask ourselves "*How* can I teach them? not *Can* I teach them?" (Dweck, 2006, p. 43). We should preach and practice a growth mindset by focusing on the idea that every student could develop their skills. Therefore, we have to take care about every single student valuing their individuality, interests, quirks and desires.

While curriculum and pedagogy are critical to a quality education, equally important are the non-cognitive skills our students are learning in school (...) viewing each student as a whole person who uniquely connects with info and the world is critical in creating a learning environment that will serve students even after they leave the classroom. When a student learns about mindsets, they gain an understanding of their power in shaping their own future" (Brock & Hundley, 2017, p. 39).

In order not to send fixed-mindset messages, we should pay also close attention to the way we praise our students. In fact, we should praise the process by which they managed to complete the task, not their intelligence nor the ability they mastered. When praising the ability, we push students right into the fixed mindset. Consequently, they are likely to reject future challenging tasks that they could learn

² <https://news.stanford.edu/stories/2015/04/growth-mindset-study-042715>

from as they won't want to do anything that could expose their flaws and call into question their talent or their intelligence. Conversely, we should praise them for the growth-oriented process – what they accomplished through practice, study, persistence, and good strategies.

Every word and action sends a message. It tells children—or students, or athletes—how to think about themselves. It can be a fixed-mindset message that says: *You have permanent traits and I'm judging them.* Or it can be a growth-mindset message that says: *You are a developing person and I am interested in your development* (Dweck, 2006, p. 101).

When giving feedback, we should tell them the truth while providing them with the tools needed to close the gap. We have to help them understand how to fix the matter in question and provide constructive criticism. We don't have to give negative labels to students or find them excuses. It is the responsibility of the teachers to cultivate students' ability to embrace negative comments.

Teachers can provide more constructive feedback with care and kindness, and emphasize the specific measures students should take to achieve the desired outcome. Furthermore, it is critical that teachers emphasize the constructive function of failures instead of rejecting them as an indication of incompetence. Teachers should encourage their students to embrace all feedback positively and learn from their mistakes by doing the necessary corrections (...) More importantly, more attention should be paid to hard work rather than intelligence or ability. (Hu et al, 2017).

We should not lower our standards either. On the contrary. We should set high standards but they have to be the same for all students, not only for those who are already achieving while concurrently providing them with the means to reach these benchmarks. "Lowering standards just leads to poorly educated students who feel entitled to easy work and lavish praise" (Dweck, 2006, p. 111).

Last but not least, we teachers need to have a good understanding of our own mindset as it is crucial to the success or failure in teaching it to others. We have to know what feeds our growth mindset so we can seek opportunities and strategies to empower ourselves. The same holds true for knowing what triggers our fixed mindset in order to work out strategies to help us manage our mindset or eliminate those triggers from our daily interactions. For instance, we must not assess the students' early on performance and make up our mind about them for good. We shouldn't judge, we should teach.

When teachers are judging them, students will sabotage the teacher by not trying. But when students understand that school is for them—a way for them to grow their minds — they do not insist on sabotaging themselves (Dweck, 2006, p. 115).

This kind of fixed mindset teachers don't believe in improvement, and they don't create it. They consider their role is simply to impart their knowledge compared to growth mindset educators who believe in the growth of the intellect and are fascinated with the process of learning.

What more can teachers do besides actually teaching growth mindset by means of their own example? They can and should organise a ***growth mindset intervention***. Its role is to raise the topic of mindsets explicitly and to convey "a concept that academic outcome can be improved, and intelligence can be developed by actions, such as making effort, seeking strategies, and asking for help" (Yeager & Dweck, 2012; Yeager, Romero, et al., 2016). It's about understanding that we have the power to achieve anything, as long as we are willing to work for it. Evidently "a growth mindset model of instruction is more successful when it interweaves with the daily curriculum of the classrooms" (Rhew et al., 2018).

There are two parts of the intervention. The first stage consists in a lecture-type presentation regarding neuroplasticity, namely raising the students' awareness about the fact that the brain forms new connections and "grows" when people practice and learn new things. "The more you challenge your mind to learn, the more your brain cells grow. The result is a stronger, smarter brain" (Dweck 2006, p. 125). An excellent example the researcher provides is that of babies. Nobody laughs at babies if they can't talk. "They just haven't learned yet". Once again, the power of *yet* and the reassurance that we can all improve, become better. In the end, this is our mission as teachers, i.e. to enable people to develop their potential. Real-life examples are crucial when comprised in the intervention but also provided whenever the case during the lectures. They represent the starting point of Dweck's research and the framework it was consequently built on.

The follow-up to the aforementioned presentation included in the intervention is an assignment given to the students. They have to write a letter to a future student who struggles in school, a "saying-is-believing" type of exercise in which students internalize the information of growth mindset. The intervention does not promise that abilities can change to an equal extent for everyone. It just highlights the *potential for change* and the results of the numerous studies conducted on the topic encourage us to invest our time and energy in this direction as it will be worth it.

Lastly, teachers should provide students with clear and explicit strategies for fostering a growth mindset:

- (1) Explicitly teach and demonstrate criteria for success.
- (2) Set up high and realistic expectations by encouraging students to set up goal and accomplish them.
- (3) Offer

options for students to select practice options that suit their preferences. (4) Constantly provide feedback so students know how to improve themselves. (5) Deliberately practice reflection, observation, and communication (Stiskin, 2022, p. 26).

MOTIVATION

The concept of mindset is intrinsically correlated to *motivation*. The studies conducted in regard to motivation (Liu & Yiran, 2022; Rhew et al. 2018; Sharma & Vipin, 2018; Soureshjani & Naseri, 2011) point out consistently that it represents a predictor of how a student will perform academically. Better yet. There are scholars who strongly believe that “motivation is a critical component for academic success in all students” (Rhew et al., 2018, p. 5). In the present article *motivation* is considered a trait that enhances the will to work dedicatedly for a specific task. It’s what “moves a person to make certain choices, to engage in action, to expend effort and persist in action” (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 3).

Motivation involves four aspects: a goal, effortful behaviour, a desire to attain the goal and favourable attitudes towards the activity, and motivation is a diffuse concept and is often tied to other factors that influence the energy and direction of behaviour factor such as interest, need, value, attitude, aspiration, and incentives (Gardner et al., 1985, p. 229).

A theoretical review of the literature has led us to the various taxonomies regarding motivation. One common categorization divides motivation into two types: *instrumental* (a desire to gain social recognition or economic advantages through the knowledge gained) and *integrative* (bolstered by the wish to improve and affected by teachers’ motivation, encouragement, and support).

On the basis of another classification, motivation is divided into extrinsic and intrinsic.

To make a relationship between this classification and the above-mentioned one, it could be assumed that *extrinsic motivation* is somehow related to instrumental motivation and *intrinsic motivation* is related to integrative motivation. (Soureshjani & Naseri, 2011, p. 663).

In other words, extrinsically motivated learners are concerned with the end results (e.g., grades, prizes) more than the task-completion process while the intrinsically motivated ones are fascinated about the process, and focus on the task itself. As a consequence, the former type of students will look for excuses and outside factors in the case of failure therefore not considering themselves

accountable for it. The latter acknowledge that they are in control of things hence they take responsibility for both their failures and achievements.

Taking into account the previous observations regarding mindsets, the similarities and connections to the types of motivation are conspicuous. Thus, intrinsically motivated students seemingly display a growth mindset as they exude enthusiasm in performing a task, seek solutions and aim for quality work. They are constantly seeking new skills therefore improving their abilities. They know that excellence takes time. Students who are extrinsically motivated, on the other hand, are distinctly characterised by a fixed mindset proven by their focus on performance goals, the importance of their own ability and sense of worth. "Ability is displayed by outperforming others, by meeting public standards or expectations, or by achieving success with minimum effort" (Lee et al., 2010, p. 271). Extrinsic incentives are embodied by rewards, punishment, praise, feedback, grades and eventually money. The downside of such motivators is that once they are withdrawn, the result is the reduction of competence and loss of interest.

A relevant example in line with the theoretical observations mentioned previously would be a workshop that we organised as part of a European project with the students from the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration. The aim of the workshop was to enhance students' interaction, awareness of different styles and methods of teaching and last but not least, social bonding between peers. The language of communication was English. The students with a growth mindset considered it a challenging endeavour, an opportunity to engage in different activities with their colleagues from a different university and to meet new people. Therefore, they enthusiastically engaged in conversation and embraced the activities suggested by the teachers. They were not interested in rewards granted due to their participation in the workshop. They considered the activity itself to be interesting and rewarding enough. On the other hand, the students with a fixed mindset, had difficulty in getting involved in the tasks along with their peers, paid close attention not to make mistakes of any kind as they considered them demeaning and sadly, they were interested in attending the workshop mainly because they were going to receive extra points at the final exam.

To sum things up, there is no doubt that a strong positive correlation exists between a growth mindset and motivation. Learners who feature this kind of mental disposition are focused on the process of learning itself not only on its outcome, on the challenge it represents and on the intellectual enrichment they will benefit from. Therefore, the studies conclude that "since a growth mindset belief can elicit students' intrinsic motivation, it is worthwhile implementing a growth

mindset intervention to shift students' mindsets" (Stiskin, 2022, p. 41) and consequently to enhance their motivation.

HOW THESE CONCEPTS ARE INTERTWINED

We have already hinted at the strong connections that exist between two of the concepts to be found in the title of the present work. Reading through the literature, I realised that there are three more crucial elements that concur and result in boosting the students' confidence and learning outcomes: self-efficacy, enjoyment and grit. In the following lines we will turn the spotlight on the complex and very tight network all these concepts are part of.

"Motivational beliefs help to promote and sustain self-regulated learning (SRL), which in turn directly contributes to academic success" (Bai, B. and Wang, J., 2023, p. 208). The aforementioned scholars have focused their studies on three motivational beliefs: growth mindset, intrinsic value, and self-efficacy. We have previously explored the features and the benefits of a growth mindset. At this point we need to understand how they are connected to the other concepts included in the list. "Intrinsic value, also called interest or perceived *enjoyment*, pertains to students' beliefs that the task is interesting" (Bai & Wang, 2023, p. 210). Intrinsically motivated learners are the ones who enjoy the task they are given and envision it as a challenge and a means to become better in the specific field. In fact, researcher Warren Bennis, studied the world's greatest corporate leaders and he surprisingly discovered that "they didn't set out to be leaders. They'd had no interest in proving themselves. They just did what they loved—with tremendous drive and enthusiasm—and it led where it led" (Dweck, 2006, p. 71).

Self-efficacy is "a domain-specific belief that is strongly related to students' previous learning experiences in a given task" (Bai & Wang, 2023, p. 209) and it refers to the extent to which they are willing to strive and persist in the task in order to complete it successfully. Seemingly, all these concepts align and their combination can only lead to rewarding performances. In fact, the studies conducted by Rhew et al. (2018) showed that:

students who had greater levels of academic self-efficacy were more likely to work harder to complete a challenging task. Students with high academic self-efficacy tended to be eager to participate in an activity, persevered through trials, and had fewer emotional frustrations or negative feelings when they were not successful than students who had lower academic self-efficacy (Rhew et al., 2018, p. 14).

Dweck herself points to the underlying bond between growth mindset and self-efficacy as “students with more of a growth mindset characteristically had higher levels of self-efficacy than students with more of a fixed mindset” (Dweck & Master, 2009, p. 131). Moreover, the approach teachers had when talking about success, failure, and challenges with students had a strong effect on increasing self-efficacy.

Last but definitely not least, there is the concept of *grit*, i.e. the “ability to tolerate difficulties though preserving the wish for long-term purposes” (Liu & Yiran, 2022, p. 4). This definition leads us back to the growth mindset as all the ingredients are present, i.e. overcoming setbacks, challenging ourselves in view of a successful outcome. Liu (2022, p. 4) also points out that “grit has a significant relationship with motivation along with resilience, hardness, and self-efficacy” while “enjoyment, as an umbrella term for motivation, is significantly correlated with learners’ grit and well-being”.

The network of concepts I mentioned previously becomes more delineated. The relationships between its elements start to take shape. In fact, the present research is grounded in the author’s interest in teaching, in being up to date with the current trends and strategies and in employing them accordingly. This is how the interest in mindset aroused. On the other hand, more specifically, the aim of the study is to apply the theoretical review of the aforementioned concepts to teaching foreign languages. But in order to be able to do this, first I had to bring all these concepts together as scholars up to now have studied them separately. The following diagram is meant to present the relationships that emerged from my research and the way we can put them to good use in order to enable our students to achieve success.

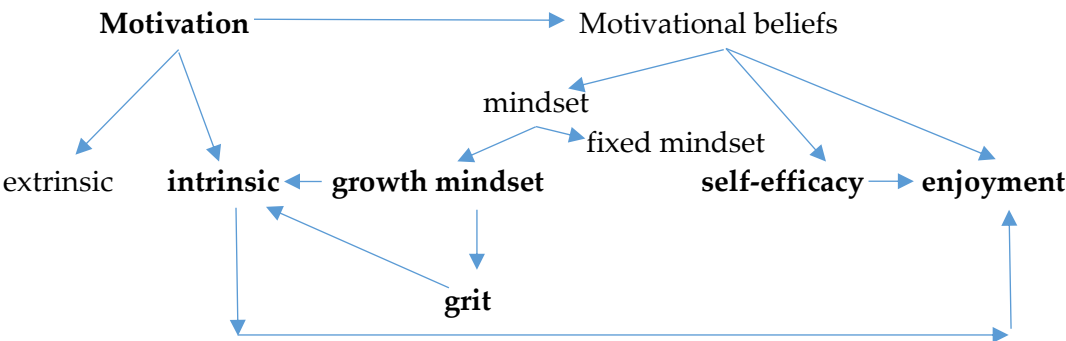


Figure 1. Network of concepts related to mindset
Source: Author’s graph

THE LITERATURE APPLIED TO TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON SPOKEN INTERACTION

Numerous studies point out the fact that while the impact of growth mindset has been studied extensively across a wide range of academic fields, including psychology and education, it has received inadequate attention in foreign language learning. In the following lines, we intend to capitalise on the previous theoretical review in order to apply the knowledge gained to the specific context of teaching foreign languages.

In line with the studies conducted on growth mindset, we can infer that a learner with a growth mindset in regard to the study of a foreign language is the one who considers it a challenge, a means not only to use a set of grammar rules and vocabulary in order to send a message, but an opportunity to immerse oneself in another culture, a chance to get to know other people's way of life and the principles it is governed by. This is why:

language learning has long been argued to be a unique educational domain because, particularly in multicultural contexts, language learning can take place not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom in the broader community through interactions with speakers of the target language (Lou & Noels, 2017, p. 214).

Similarly, what has been previously discussed related to the teachers' role in fostering a growth mindset, is to be applied to the particular case of teaching languages. Hence, it's crucial for educators to understand the learners' emotional and behavioural reactions to challenges. Due to the fact that language learning is a long-term process which, as mentioned, often also takes place outside the classroom context, it is important to understand how people in the broader society outside the classroom can affect learners' mindsets, and how mindsets might predict linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes. There are learners who believe strongly that language ability is fixed. Therefore, they will display a higher level of anxiety when not performing successfully, they will more likely feel discouraged and prone to give up trying. On the other hand, if they think that they are competent in their L2, they will tend to demonstrate their level of ability in order to win positive judgments of competence from themselves and others. Growth mind setters instead will continue to strive even in face of difficulties without getting demotivated when making mistakes and without looking for validation. They will feel empowered and in control of their learning outcomes considering that getting things wrong is not a proof of one's lack of ability or talent, but merely a normal part of the language learning process.

These theoretical delimitations are endorsed by the results of the studies conducted in the field. I wish to highlight one in particular. Lou and Noels (2020, p. 541) conducted three studies on 581 migrant university students. Their research disclosed that:

Growth in language mindsets, reduced perceived language-based rejection, and improved lower-competence ESL students' intercultural interactions. Conversely, in daily interactions with native speakers, those with fixed language mindsets perceived more rejection, and they interacted less in English with peers (Lou & Noels, 2020, p. 541).

In their synthesis of recent research, Ng and Cheung underline the fact that "growth-mindset learners tended to initiate language-related episodes", and are willing to communicate in and out of class and enjoy themselves while doing that, "whereas students with fixed language mindset were more likely to experience boredom in English class" (Ng & Cheung, 2024, p. 106).

The process of language learning context is peculiar and complex. We need to consider external factors such as sociocultural and sociostructural implications, but also at the individual level, the learners' propensities, including their aptitude for developing language skills.

Considering that many language learners hold the essentialist belief that language learning requires an effortless, natural talent, it is important to help students to develop a constructivist, incremental mindset, which can guide them to set learning goals and help them to treat mistakes and failure situations more optimistically as opportunities to further develop their capacities (Lou & Noels, 2017, p. 232).

Similar to the general growth mindset intervention described previously, in a language learning context teachers should make the students aware of the fact that the brain develops with every new thing that we learn, but so does language intelligence. Therefore, teachers should stage a tailor-made intervention for language learning. In order to absorb the theoretical pieces of information provided, students should be given the opportunity to discuss them in class. Let's bear in mind that learners' beliefs are not only shaped explicitly through teachers' direct interventions but also subtly through their interactions with others in their learning environment. Moreover, an exploration of learning strategies is imperative. Learners can be helped to recognize the power and control they can have of their own learning through goal setting, use of strategies, regular practice, and actively learning from one's mistakes. In fact, instructors need to underline the potential mistakes offer for learning as this will strengthen their growth mindset.

Lastly, they should be provided with further study materials (online materials and activities such as videos and/or games included). The intervention should conclude with a written assignment comprising but not being limited to their reflections on the topic in question.

It was previously mentioned that teachers should preach and practice growth mindset. Therefore, beside the actual intervention meant to raise the learners' awareness regarding the positive correlations between growth mindsets and academic achievement, educators should also send growth mind messages by means of their own behaviour and engagement. They "are needed to provide pleasant learning contexts, find materials to improve learners' positive attitudes and motivation for improving their grit and persistence in the effort" (Liu, 2022, p. 4). They also have to design creative, interesting, and pleasant language tasks since motivating tasks can heighten learners' cognitive resources, grit, and strengthen language learning in their minds. They should consult with their students and seek to provide tailor-made activities as these will engage them to a greater extent and they will be more enjoyable. Let's not forget that enjoyment is one of the crucial elements researched in the current study. "Enjoyment can help individuals gain broader perspectives and increase their capacity to absorb new material in language learning" (Hu et al., 2022, p. 11).

In regard to the role of motivation in a language learning context, Bai and Wang found that intrinsically motivated learners "enjoy the process of mastering that language and language learning is pleasurable in itself" compared to the extrinsically motivated one who learns it only in order to gain "rewards and avoid punishment, meeting parents' and teachers' expectations, and interacting with others" (Bai & Wang, 2023, p. 210).

Any approach to teaching foreign languages focuses on the four core language skills pinpointed by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (2001) *Listening* and *written production* stand out as skills that can be practiced individually, not necessarily or not only in class surrounded by one's peers. To a greater extent, *reading* requires teacher's feedback both with regard to vocabulary as well as pronunciation. But the skill that cannot, by any means, be practiced individually, the one that can be developed and enhanced only in relation to at least one other person, is *speaking*. And this is exactly what makes it so special, so delicate to approach and to teach. Therefore, in the author's opinion, speaking is the skill that learners of foreign languages will benefit the most from, if fostering a growth mindset.

Why do communication skills represent such a delicate and intimate matter? Because most learners feel exposed when they have to speak in another language. They are afraid of being judged by their peers for their mistakes, for their mispronunciation etc. This inherently triggers their withdrawal, lack of engagement and rejection of the task given, ultimately leading to a rejection of the target language itself. Growth mind setters instead will take the opportunity to express their ideas and opinions. They will not consider mistakes as setbacks, but as chances to learn and improve their skills.

Speaking is about providing students with opportunities for genuine communication embodied by interactive, co-operative, content-based activities and employing authentic materials. Teachers should act as independent participants to the learning-teaching group, their main role being to facilitate and monitor the communication process between all participants in the classroom.

When language learners are engaged in meaningful communication in a second language, they are able to focus on meaning, negotiate to make input comprehensible, and try out new language forms as they produce language (Gass & Mackey, 2006, p. 5).

Interacting with an expert speaker or teacher provides students correct models of language use and it's an opportunity to receive reliable feedback on their language use. In interactions with language teachers, they also obtain expert scaffolding (assistance with words or grammar) to help them express meanings they cannot formulate on their own. But peer interaction should not be underestimated. It doesn't provide as much feedback as native speakers or teachers and sometimes it can even be faulty, but still learners get more chances to speak, and they produce substantially more language in peer interactions. They get more time to correct their own language errors because peer interactions move slower than interactions with native speakers or instructors. Learners also get chances to figure out how to express their ideas collaboratively, rather than simply accepting guidance from a teacher.

Teachers should explicitly stress that the students' goal is to be able to use the language they are learning, not just know how to apply the grammar rules. The concept of growth mindset is pinned by the abundance of examples. Hence, teachers should give examples of successful language learners (ranging from business people to politicians, etc) and share their own personal experience as well.

CONCLUSIONS

Studying the literature and applying the theoretical concepts researched to the specific case of teaching languages, we turned the spotlight on how the educational system should create a conducive environment by nurturing a growth mindset and grit for students to reach their long-term goals.

To maximize the impact of a growth mindset on students, we should reinforce this concept to all the stakeholders in school systems, including teachers, students, parents, school staff, school district, and communities. In other words, a growth mindset training should be provided to not only teachers, but also students, parents, and other important key stakeholders involved in the education systems (Stiskin, 2022, p. 51).

The theoretical review presented in the first part of the current article concluded that there are positive correlations between grit, mindset and motivations. Therefore, in the author's view and consistent with the studies conducted in the field, grit, motivation, and mindsets should be highlighted in school curricula and teacher education. "Attending to learners' motivation, language mindset, and grit may boost students' positive emotions may improve the collaboration among peers, increase teacher's rapport with learners and eventually stimulate learners' sense of enjoyment" (Liu, 2022, p. 4).

Students need to be aware that "working hard" does not mean "not being smart". Hence, they may develop a malleable or growth mindset, which would also cultivate the 21st-century skills along with resilience, optimism, positive relationships, and character strengths. According to Hu et al. (2022), enhancing growth mindset and motivation will also trigger an increase in their grit resulting in the improvement of their academic achievements. Teachers have to foster "a family-like classroom environment atmosphere embracing failure as part of the English grammar and reading journey and a positive attitude toward mistakes" (Wilang, 2021, p. 99). There is also the urgency to design creative assessment frameworks. For instance, continuous formative assessment "postulates a less aggressive and stressful learning environment, leading to less anxiety among EFL students which can undermine their enjoyment in language learning" (Hu et al, 2022). Given that language mindsets are changeable and depend on students' language learning experience, future research should also address how learners acquire their beliefs from diverse sources.

Addressing specifically the matter of teaching speaking, further studies should be conducted on how to

adopt and adapt existing mindset interventions and measures to meet different language contexts and learner groups. The measurement of oral communication is complex, involving the accuracy of speech and fluency, such as communicative competence and appropriacy of verbal and non-verbal communication. Future research can consider these other aspects. Most of the oral communication studies were on university students, so there could be more studies on other educational levels (Ng & Cheung, 2024, p. 109).

In conclusion, teachers should focus on

blended learning that provides the best features of classroom interaction and live instruction to personalize learning, allow thoughtful reflection, and differentiate instruction as per the students' learning styles, learning proficiency and their learning ability; motivation and teaching strategies supporting motivation may contribute to the students' communicative competence. A friendly attitude and behaviour in the class will overcome all the complexities" (Sharma, 2018, p. 46).

Last but definitely not least, the effect of learners' motivation on teachers' well-being and work engagement can also be studied. Students are not the only beneficiaries of implementing the concepts hereby explored. A growth mindset endorsed by motivation and grit will undoubtedly result in a boost of the teacher's work-life quality and self-esteem.

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Adapting the Creative Writing Classroom to the New Age

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Abstract: While it is the nature of pedagogical practices that they are constantly evolving, this truth has perhaps never been more evident than it is today. In the case of Creative Writing – an academic field that is itself old and yet in many ways very new – the standard approach has been the workshop. Here students are tasked with writing their own original work and then discussing it as a group, while grades are given based on the perceived quality of the text. Yet, not only has the method of evaluation been called into question of late, but the appearance of artificial intelligence technology threatens to call into question the entire *modus operandi*, what with existing programs that can more or less write the texts for them. The present article represents this scholar's method of adapting the teaching of a Creative Writing class to the considerations and realities of today, where stress is placed on performance rather than competence and in which a chatbot AI program – in this case OpenAI's 'ChatGPT' – is integrated into the pedagogical process.

Keywords: *Creative writing, pedagogy, grades, effort-grading, ChatGPT*

INTRODUCTION

Perhaps since its inception, formal education has always had a dual nature, bringing together two elements that would otherwise be incompatible. On the one hand, it seeks to conserve knowledge and good practices, which a teacher has the duty of handing down to future generations, so that they in turn can carry these time-honored notions forward, whichever they may be. On the other hand, as society undergoes change, scholars are constantly looking for ways to bring innovation into their classrooms. What this means is that scholars usually have a set of tried and true methods of teaching at their disposal, yet, at the same time, they have to constantly examine where and how improvements can be implemented, whether that entails alternative approaches to how knowledge is transmitted, the introduction of new technologies or even looking for other ways of evaluating the work that students hand in.

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For the purposes of this paper, I will focus on the practice of teaching creative writing, which is now over a century old. It has existed for long enough that certain practices have become tradition. For example, especially in Anglophone institutions, classes usually take the form of workshops, where students are expected to produce original pieces of text which are evaluated by the professors or by peers or both, and grades are most often given based on participation and on the quality of the final products. When trying to envision a contemporary reconceptualization of these standard practices, one place to look at then is this means of evaluation, to question the extent to which the grades a student gets actually help students become better writers, and the present paper is a reflection of an attempt at putting an alternative approach into practice. At the same time, an adaptation of a Creative Writing course to today's digital environment means that professors are obligated to deal with the emergence and explosive growth of Large Language Model programs like ChatGPT. Here too I outline one method of integrating this AI system within a Creative Writing course.

GRADING REVISED

The act of grading student performance is so ubiquitous in today's formal education system that we collectively associate it with education itself. Since nearly as far back as an individual can remember, they each take part in one school system or another that issues some form of mark that is meant to take the result of the work of a particular child and place it neatly within a predetermined category, whether it's a binary system of 'pass/fail' or something more multileveled like grading. The child that comes into contact with this system and experiences it throughout the entirety of their developmental stages of life soon comes to see grades as an integral part of the learning process, as something normal that has always existed and will always exist. Yet, it may surprise some to find out then that grades are a fairly new concept. Even though "educational assessment originated toward the end of the medieval period, in order to group students within schools on the basis of mastery" (Grant & Green, 2013, p. 1564), specific number and letter grades were only introduced alongside the rise of public schooling within the last two centuries. In addition, since their appearance and rise in popularity, there have been scholars who have questioned their value. While it is not the purpose of the present paper to go into a deep dive analysis of this ongoing discussion, it is sufficient to note here the two important grievances researchers have put forward regarding grades with respect to their effectiveness and their influence on the learning process. This will

help explain why I chose for my Creative Writing class to focus on giving students points for effort rather than for the specific quality of the work they hand in.

One of the biggest criticisms to grading is that it doesn't actually facilitate learning. Shinske and Tanner (2014), for example, present research conducted by Brookhart (2008) on two kinds of feedback – *evaluative feedback*, which assigns a quality to an assignment and includes grades, and *descriptive feedback*, which provides information about how a student can become more competent (Brookhart, in Shinske & Tanner, 2014, p. 161, emphasis mine). By examining the evolution of student performance, the analysis concludes that students who received descriptive feedback, but no grades showed the greatest level of improvement in performance from one assignment to the next, followed by students who received a combination of both types. By far the poorest performance was registered by students who only received grades. Other research conducted came to similar conclusions, leading Shinske and Tanner to conclude that

Grading does not appear to provide effective feedback that constructively informs students' future efforts. This is particularly true for tasks involving problem solving or creativity. Even when grading comes in the form of written comments, it is unclear whether students even read such comments, much less understand and act on them. (Shinske & Tanner, 2014, p. 161)

Since the course I teach and discuss in this paper involves a significant degree of creativity, it follows that grades do little to help students understand how to write fiction.

There are many possible reasons why grades do not lead to increased learning, at least not as much as we would like to believe. One cause may have to do with student motivation, which are thought to belong to two distinct categories: *intrinsic motivations*, which represent the individual's personal reasons for wanting to learn something, and *extrinsic motivations*, which are the awards and punishments that one receives when studying. Grant and Green (2013) examines the way that grades influence these two types of motivations and, specifically, by analyzing why students make the choices they make in a class, the researchers conclude that "students have an intrinsic 'achievement motive' that is *weakened* by the use of incentives [and that] this diminishes the potency of extrinsic rewards" (Grant & Green, 2013, p. 1566). In addition, a lot depends on how students perceive their own abilities and competence. If their opinions are largely negative, the result is that they "adopt a 'performance-avoidance' goal—essentially a maxim in objective that tries to moderate bad outcomes rather than strive for good ones" (ibid). When students are motivated primarily by grades and lack the confidence that they can perform

tasks well enough, they will focus primarily on trying to not receive a low mark rather than striving to receive a high one, while the knowledge that they might acquire is of secondary importance. Thus, in traditional educational circumstances, not only do students end up focusing on the wrong thing – on grades, rather than on knowledge or skills – but, when they also lack confidence, they consider that merely receiving a mark above a predetermined threshold is acceptable.

In response to these and other issues that have to do with grades, one alternative that some scholars have come up with is to focus on *effort grading*. What this means is that, rather than receiving marks based on the accuracy of the information presented in an assignment, students are provided “opportunities to earn credit in a course for simply doing the work, completing assigned tasks, and engaging with the material” (Shinske & Tanner, 2014, p. 164). The assumption is that, by guaranteeing that a student receives a specific grade simply by completing and handing in an assignment, their stress levels are significantly lowered, leading to a greater intrinsic desire to learn. A study conducted by Omari Swinton (2010), which focuses on the relationship between effort and knowledge acquisition seems to confirm this supposition. By analyzing and comparing student performance in tasks that either granted points for effort or for knowledge, he concludes that “an increase in the effort grade does lead to an increase in the knowledge grade” (Swinton, 2010, p. 1180). This means that students gain knowledge simply by putting in the effort of completing an assignment and potentially do so to a higher degree than in the case of assignments which are graded in a more conventional manner. It is such results that have convinced me as a teacher to seek out ways in which I might implement a method of evaluation that is based more on effort-grading in my Creative Writing course.

THE RISE OF CHATGPT

OpenAI’s artificial intelligence platform ChatGPT launched in 2022 and hit the world by storm. Although seemingly simple in its appearance, its ability to carry out conversations in a very human-like manner and to produce texts almost instantaneously had people scrambling to explore the various ways in which it can be put to use in a wide array of fields. In education, an analysis of public opinion on the matter conducted by Tim Fütterer et. al. (2023) found that “the costs of education and how educators could use ChatGPT for teaching were discussed positively (e.g., the possibility of saving time)” (Fütterer et. al. 2023, p. 10). Some of the advantages to including this and similar AI programs within the education

process include automatically correcting standardized tests and providing additional materials for students. At the same time, many scholars have expressed deep concern over some of the less ethical ways in which ChatGPT could be put into practice. Particularly, and for good reason, teachers worry about the possibility for students to use AI to complete tasks that they would have had to do themselves in order to develop certain important skills, such as critical thinking and the ability to process information and render it efficiently in text format. In addition, reliance on the information provided by a program like ChatGPT is cause for concern, as “the risk that ChatGPT will produce texts with plausible sounding but incorrect information is high” (Fütterer et. al. 2023, p. 4).

There is a real possibility that wide-spread unregulated use of AI programs such as ChatGPT could lead to a decline in cognitive skills within students, as well as the proliferation of false information that could cause further harm. Getting rid of this technology would perhaps be the simplest solution, but this is no longer an option, as the last couple of years alone have seen companies big and small from all across the world implement AI into their systems at various points so much so that, in a very short amount of time, it will most likely become an integral part of our society, especially with respect to online dealings. Therefore, while I, as a teacher, have had to deal with some of the more problematic aspects of AI entering the domain of my classroom, the conclusion is that its presence is inevitable and, as such, we must try to discover ways in which to integrate programs like ChatGPT into our curriculum and thus establish some control over how students can utilize them.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE(S)

To date, Babeş-Bolyai University does not have a Creative Writing program per se. This is not surprising in so far as the undergraduate level is concerned, since it would require the establishment of a national plan for proper standards and practices and, to my knowledge, no such endeavor exists at this time. The establishment of an MA program might be doable, and one did exist for a while at the West University of Timișoara, however, it was fairly short-lived and, since its discontinuation, no other attempt has been made, whether by that institution or any other. While there are many valid reasons to incorporate Creative Writing into a university’s course offerings, this academic field has so far garnered only limited interest in European countries and is more often found in Anglophone spaces. This is unfortunate, especially for philologists, since, in the words of Veronica Austin:

“not only does effective essay writing require creativity, but [...] one must recognize that the writing of literature is a critical activity requiring writers to assess the works of others in order to gain inspiration for and insight into their own literary writing” (Austen, 2005, p. 3).

In other words, students who wish to develop the skills to critically analyze a work of literature would benefit greatly from courses that help them view texts from the standpoint of how they are not only consumed, but also produced. There are other benefits to a Creative Writing program, not in the least its popularity among students in the US, UK and Australian universities that is at such a height at present as to consider the claim that “we are living in a golden age of creative writing” (Traina, 2022, p. 1). For a more detailed illustration of the advantages of a Creative Writing program and of the situation in and around Europe, see Oltean-Cîmpean 2023.

In light of an actual program, what BBU does have on offer are two courses taught by this author at different faculties. While they both have the same aim of teaching students how to write short stories, they differ somewhat in terms of structure and evaluation. The first has been on offer for over a decade at the Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences and is intended mainly for those studying Journalism in English. Being an optional course, it has both a weekly 2-hour meeting that focuses on analyzing texts and discussing the theory behind writing short fiction, as well as a bi-weekly seminar where students solve practical writing exercises. Although categorized as *optional*, in practice every student has to take it, meaning that the number of participants is considerably high, often surpassing the standard maximum of 25 students in a group. Last year’s class, for example, had 44 participants, which is a particularly high number of students. This makes giving feedback a more challenging endeavor, reason for which assessment is limited to the completion of a mid-term assignment and to writing one short story by the end of the semester for which students receive a grade. The second course I teach is a very new practical course that began only this year and which is on offer at the Faculty of Letters. It is aimed at second year English majors and consists of a single weekly meeting where students have to go through all three elements – text analysis, theory discussions, exercises – during each 90-minute class. While this does mean that students have less of an opportunity to engage in writing practice, the nature of the practical courses on offer for English majors makes it possible to keep the number of students considerably lower. This in turn makes it possible to provide a more nuanced form of evaluation and even to experiment with

different approaches to grading. It is, therefore, on the manner in which Creative Writing work was evaluated in this course that this paper will focus.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

In order to get the highest grade, the 18 students who enrolled in this year's Creative Writing course were given the task of completing both mandatory and optional writing assignments. The first category in the syllabus is comprised of prompts, a sample fragment of a short story and a completed draft of the same short story. Prompts here refer to a set of topics that someone could produce a text on, such as *Write down an interesting piece of dialogue you were part of or listened to* or *Describe an unusual person you've encountered*. The purpose of this exercise is to get students accustomed to the practice of writing, as this will prepare them for the next, larger task at hand. For this reason, the quality of the text is less important than the sheer act of completing the task, as this in itself fulfills the intention behind the prompts. This means that there is little point in providing feedback on the texts produced, leaving both students and teacher with ample time and energy set aside for the other tasks assigned in this course. Upon completion of the two prompts, the student automatically receives 2/10 points.

The second mandatory assignment is the sample text and synopsis of the larger text that students will end up writing. Since the end goal of the course is for students to produce an original and complete short story, one must acknowledge the fact that no amount of text analysis, theory or writing exercises can guarantee that students will succeed in creating a proper work of fiction. To put it simply, they won't know whether they can write a short story until they try. At the same time, past experience gained from early years of teaching the course for Journalism students has shown me that giving students the task of writing a complete first draft of a story after only seven (or even nine) meetings often resulted in a text that was rushed and one which would require students to put into practice elements of style that we would not have covered by then, as for example the issue of incorporating visual elements into sections of dialogue. As such, in the case of both courses, students now have to hand in a 3-page sample of their future short story, as well as a synopsis that presents what the student intends to write about in the story as a whole. Feedback in this case is made available to the writers in detail and focuses on how well they have managed to implement the elements of writing that are discussed in class and that are present and highlighted in the analyzed texts. As far as grading is concerned, here too the main goal is for students to complete the

assignment and hand it in on time. Therefore, another 2/10 points are given solely on effort, on proof that the student put in the work necessary to complete the task.

The feedback that is given on the first draft becomes relevant only for the completed short story, which is to be no more than 8 pages long. Handing this in at the end of the semester represents the third and last mandatory assignment, where a maximum of 6/10 points are given based on how well the student has managed to take into consideration the notions that are presented in class, as well as the teacher's comments on the sample text and synopsis. Feedback is not necessarily given unless the student requires it. As one can notice, in this case points are not given only on the basis of effort but also in relation to how well the student was able to assimilate and comprehend the information that has been made available to them throughout the semester.

At this point, it might seem proper to question why I would supposedly place importance, both in this article and outside the confines of these pages, on effort-based grading over that based on the assimilation and rendition of knowledge, when the majority of the final grade I assign to this Creative Writing course is based on the latter form of assessment rather than the former. As a result, it may seem that my claims are contradicted by my choices. What should be understood here is that I chose this route out of consideration for the fact that the reverse might seem too bewildering to students who have so far only encountered more traditional modes of evaluation. Simply put, students who have been conditioned for years to focus on grades, as is so often the case in Romania, might be too taken aback by a course whose teacher calls into question the value of such forms of evaluation. Nevertheless, in order to insist on a more effort-based form of grading, I introduced three bonus assignments in the evaluation grid for this course: one to submit two entries of a writer's diary; one to write a scene from a piece of fan fiction and one to submit a review of another colleague's sample text of their short story. Students were given the possibility of completing anywhere between none of these tasks and all three of these tasks. For each assignment they were given one additional point upon submission, with no feedback provided unless explicitly requested. Two facts result from the addition of these bonus assignments: the first is that a single student can, hypothetically, earn a maximum of 13/10 points for the course; the second is that now 7/13 points, meaning more than half, are made available to the student purely on the basis of task completion rather than on the knowledge that the student might prove that they have acquired.

At the end of the semester, the results of this method of evaluation have been quite favorable, although it might surprise some to know that not every student

scored a maximum grade. With respect to the initial prompts, seventeen out of the eighteen students handed in this writing task on time, with the odd person out existing only because the person in question arrived late to the course and missed the deadline. In regards to the sample text and synopsis of their short stories, every student submitted both texts on time. This meant that each of them had either two or four points guaranteed before handing in the completed short story, which, as a matter of fact, all eighteen students did. Therefore, with the one exception, every student had the possibility of earning full marks for the course before any additional points were considered, although, depending on how well students were able to process the feedback received and the class discussions, this was not always the case. With respect to the bonus assignments, it was somewhat disheartening to find that only 7 out of 18 students actually handed in any work. While the exact reason for this low number is unclear, it is most likely due to time constraints, as students both here and in other institutions have complained in the past that responsibilities towards other courses limit the time they might set aside for writing, when the task is not mandatory. It is also true that, in terms of grading alone, only one of the students actually benefitted from the added point, however, in truth, the points were never really more than an added incentive to encourage people to put in additional work. It is similar to how free snacks are sometimes offered during an office meeting – the snacks are not the main purpose of the get-together, but they can function as an effective tool in luring reluctant, yet peckish employees.

INCORPORATING CHATGPT

Since it exploded onto the internet, OpenAI's platform ChatGPT has led to people all across the globe quickly brainstorm a vast array of ways in which they could put this new powerful tool to use, for both beneficial and more nefarious reasons. As mentioned above, within academia, one concern that quickly gained traction surrounds the fact that students could use this program to complete their written assignments for them, thus circumventing the work that would otherwise help develop important skills that they would go on to use later in life. The first and most obvious response to this threat was for teachers to simply forbid students to use this technology and to punish them in the event that they do, thus striving to maintain the status quo that we have all been accustomed to so far. Admittedly, this was the option I initially chose for the optional course at the Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences during the first semester of the

2023/2024 school year and the results were less than encouraging, as is explained in further detail below.

What became clear is that, for better or for worse, AI technology is here to stay and will be used by students whether we want it or not. Therefore, rather than attempting to swim against the current, for my practical course at the Faculty of Letters I sought a means by which a program like ChatGPT could be incorporated into the learning process. Right from the start, I made two important observations: the first is that ChatGPT is terrible at writing a short story. The second is that Chat GPT is great at coming up with *ideas* for short stories.

There is no fixed, universally accepted definition of a short story, however, overall, such a text is characterized as having fewer pages than a novella, possessing a single protagonist and depicting one important event or experience that has a long-lasting impact on the character going forward (whatever that might mean). The text is also supposed to possess a chosen and consistent style that is unique to the author and the words must be carefully chosen in such a way that they put forward as much information as possible in as little space as possible about the characters and the situation they find themselves in. When prompted to write a short story, ChatGPT runs into numerous issues, as the example below illustrates:

Once upon a time in the small town of Crestwood, there lived a man named Thomas Bennett. Thomas was a middle-aged man, worn down by the pressures of life, haunted by regrets, and burdened by the weight of responsibilities. He had a steady job, a family to support, but deep down, he often yearned for a chance to go back and make different choices.

One chilly morning, Thomas awoke to a strange sensation. The room felt different, the light seemed softer, and as he groggily sat up, he noticed something odd. His hands, once marked by the passage of time, were now smooth and unblemished. Bewildered, he stumbled out of bed and caught a glimpse of himself in the mirror. Staring back at him was the face of a 16-year-old boy.

The realization hit him like a tidal wave. Somehow, Thomas had been granted a second chance, a return to the most pivotal time in his life. He was 16 again, with the opportunity to reshape his destiny.

Thomas decided to use this rare gift wisely. He invested time in honing his skills, participating in activities he had neglected before. He joined the school band, discovered a passion for painting, and even started writing poetry. His youthful energy, combined with the wisdom of age, made him a unique presence in the high school community.

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The people of Crestwood noticed a change in Thomas, a radiance that transcended the physical transformation. He became an advocate for second chances, urging

others to appreciate the precious moments of their lives and to learn from the past without being enslaved by it.

As the years passed, Thomas carried the memories of his extraordinary journey. The man who woke up 16 years old had not only rediscovered the joy of youth but had also discovered the timeless wisdom that comes with embracing life, no matter the age.

The above text is a fragment of the one ChatGPT produced when given the prompt *Write me a short story about a man who wakes up and is 16 years old again*. The first thing that might strike the reader is the phrase *Once upon a time* which, unless specifically instructed not to do so, the program will almost always open with. It does not seem to understand that this beginning is usually reserved for certain specific types of prose fiction such as fairy tales and would certainly seem odd to a reader, given the topic of the story. A second problem that would immediately catch the eye of the reader is the length of the paragraphs. In most texts written by a human there is a lot of variation in this regard, as the author's struggle to express certain ideas necessitates more or less page space. Variation in length is also advisable in order to overcome any potential issues with monotony; a text such as the one above, with blocks of text of nearly equal size has a real risk of boring the reader, regardless of how interesting the story itself might be.

With respect to the finer points of writing, ChatGPT performs poorly when it comes to one of the main tenants of fiction writing *show, don't tell*. For example, the text states that the protagonist Thomas Bennett was "worn down by the pressures of life, haunted by regrets, and burdened by the weight of responsibilities" instead of giving the reader specific visual cues such as hunched shoulders and a morose attitude that might indicate what it is that the author is trying to express without saying it outright. Then there is no dialogue. The fragment states that Thomas interacts with other characters, but the reader is not given the opportunity to see any of it and the result is a text that feels more like the summary of a story than the story itself. Finally, while ChatGPT manages to stay focused on what would be the main event of the story – Thomas Bennett waking up to find that he is a teenager again and his journey towards coming to terms with this – by the end, within the last two paragraphs of the text, the AI program extends the tale well beyond the limits of a short story by shifting the focus first on the people around Thomas and what they broadly notice and then suddenly jumping to the years that followed. All in all, the result is a poor-quality text that would barely pass off as a short story and, while the program can overcome some of the issues presented here, this necessitates several runs of fine-tuning that prompt to the point where the user might as well

take the time to write the whole short story themselves. All the issues above and more belonging to other AI generated texts were discussed in class.

Despite the numerous shortcomings of ChatGPT when trying to write a short fiction, one cannot deny that it does succeed in creating an overall idea for a piece of fiction. In this case, it presents the idea that Thomas Bennett was unhappy with his life and that he woke up one morning with a chance to relive the past and choose a different path. It presents the choices he makes and the effect this has on him as a result. Thus, ChatGPT has the potential to provide someone not with a short story per se, but with a broad outline of a story. With this in mind, for the mandatory assignment that asks them to write an outline of a story and three sample pages, students were given the option to either come up with their own ideas or to give ChatGPT a prompt and convert the generated text into a proper short story. The results were both very positive and surprising. First of all, in terms of fair play, there is a marked difference when comparing the work done in this class at the Faculty of Letters and the ones from the Faculty of Political, Administrative and Communication Sciences. As I've mentioned, the students in the latter course were not given the opportunity to use ChatGPT for inspiration, nor were the advantages and drawbacks of the program discussed in class. Participants were simply told that their texts would have to be wholly original and that using AI would mean not receiving any points for assignments. Despite the clear warning, 9 out of the 44 students who took the Creative Writing class handed in texts written entirely by ChatGPT. In contrast, of the 18 students from the Faculty of Letters who took part in the practical course, all handed in original work, whether the sample text was inspired by a prompt given to ChatGPT or they came up with their own outline for a short story. What is perhaps even more interesting is that only four of the students chose to use ChatGPT at all, the majority preferring instead to come up with every detail of their short stories themselves. These figures and the comparison between the two courses are not meant to be viewed as highlighting any differences between students of different faculties, but rather to emphasize the result of two very different approaches to participants using ChatGPT: where students were simply denied the option, a significant number of them decided nevertheless to defy the requirement. When utilizing the AI program was made available and discussed in class, not only did the prospect of cheating vanish, but most students opted to ignore the option entirely.

CONCLUSIONS

As can be seen above, the present paper is a description and analysis of an alternative approach to teaching Creative Writing. First of all, based on the research conducted by scholars such as Shinske & Tanner or Grant & Green, who raise serious concerns regarding the effectiveness of grades within the learning process, the evaluation method that was put into practice for the 18 students that attended the 2024 class at the Faculty of Letters comprised of a mixture of knowledge and effort-based grading, with an emphasis on the latter. At the same time, with the rapid rise of AI technology and its inevitable impact on education, this paper also presents this teacher's attempt at embracing this new phenomenon rather than simply rejecting it, by offering students a means of utilizing OpenAI's platform ChatGPT in a way that could remain ethical from an academic point of view.

With respect to the method of evaluation, a mixed approach was deemed preferable mainly because students (and, to be fair, the teacher as well) were in no way acclimated to a purely effort-based grading system. Nevertheless, knowledge-based grading made up less than half of the total potential points that a student could attain and the feedback regarding this approach was largely positive. When asked about this alternative way of grading, students pointed out that it felt a lot less stressful and allowed them to focus on completing the work to the best of their abilities without having to worry whether it was good enough. At the same time, as specified, the number of students who completed one or more of the bonus tasks was rather low, although this could be due to external constraints such as a high workload for other courses or social commitments. Such a possibility is not unheard of. In their analysis of why someone might choose to or choose not to even take up Creative Writing, many students confessed that "they do not have the time and/or energy to engage in creative writing while at university" (Meekings et al, 2023, p. 9). It is not beyond consideration then that, even when they do choose to take up such a course, students might choose to only do the bare minimum and then focus on other obligations. Another possibility might be that they simply find it difficult to conceive of completing a task when they're not sure that it is even necessary to do so to get a satisfactory grade. In any case, given the results, one thing remains clear, namely that, at best, focusing on evaluation encouraged some students to put in more effort in my Creative Writing class and, at worst, it did nothing to decrease the quality of said work.

With respect to how OpenAI's program ChatGPT was incorporated into the teaching methodology, both in-class discussions and the option to use AI led to results which are both positive and, in some respects, surprising. Something that

wasn't stated before but that is worth mentioning is that the close-text analysis of texts generated by ChatGPT that was conducted in class left students surprised and rather disappointed by respect to the program's capabilities. This might explain why so many of them chose to ignore the possibility of using ChatGPT even when they were specifically given the possibility of doing so.

Overall, setting up a course that focuses on effort-based grading and that allows students to utilize AI technology in a controlled manner has yielded positive results. The caveat here is that the whole study was conducted on a single course comprised of just 18 students. Moving forward, it is my intention to implement the same tactics to both classes I teach, despite the large number of students in the optional course and it remains to be seen whether the results will be similar.

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Online resources

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Exploring the Potential of a “Pluriliteracies Approach” for Tertiary, Specialised, Foreign Language Material Design

ADINA-MARIA MEZEI¹

Abstract: The *pluriliteracy* principle developed within the methodological framework of the “Pluriliteracies approach to teaching for learning” (PTL) states that deep learning of a subject involves going beyond the simple rendition of factual knowledge towards the enhancement of learners’ ability to communicate *subject-specific content* in nuanced, versatile, multimodal, genre-appropriate ways and, if possible, in more than one language. PTL’s perspective views the development of literacies as a conscious, pre-planned endeavour of *the content subject lesson*, which involves not only the manipulation of specific content, but also of relevant conceptual/procedural language. While agreeing with these principles, this article turns the spotlight on the development of literacies as part of *specialised language lessons*, by exploring how deep learning can be augmented in the context of teaching English as a foreign language for specific purposes (ESAP) to students at the Faculty of Biology and Geology, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. The focus is on the exploration of ESAP material planning and design with PTL-oriented principles incorporated, with the aim of fostering the deep learning of specialised vocabulary, of typical lexical/grammatical structures and implicitly of subject content.

Keywords: *Pluriliteracies approach to teaching for learning (PTL), English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP), English for Biology students, language material design, CLIL*

INTRODUCTION

Our interest in the current study revolves around the idea of exploring how the study possibilities of English as a foreign language can be improved in the context of a specialised practical language course, delivered at tertiary level. The course is taught to undergraduate students at the Babeş-Bolyai University (UBB) of Cluj-Napoca, enrolled in Biology-related subfields. This is a two-semester elective course belonging to the university’s L2-language offer. According to *UBB’s Language Policy* (Babeş-Bolyai University, 2021), the study of *specialised* languages is

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compulsory at L2 level and is consistent with the multi-/plurilingual policy that has been endorsed at European, national and university level. The entry proficiency level required is B1, while the general objective of the course specifies that students will be able to utilise English competently, at a B2 level, both in their *academic* and in their future *professional* activity. In other words, the course content is twofold, and it is integrated into the realm of English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP).

This paper presents some practical considerations emerging along the process of revisiting and (re-)designing the ESAP course material for the first semester, which was undertaken by integrating principles from within the Applied Linguistics framework, with a focus on the *Pluriliteracies approach to teaching for learning* (PTL). The starting point is to promote deep learning in such a way that students' motivation is maintained throughout the course, concentrating on interweaving language-focused activities with study skills ones and action-oriented tasks. The initial step seeks to indicate how ESAP and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)/PTL integrate within the Applied Linguistics framework, delineating some of their main features. Next, emphasis is placed on how some PTL principles were incorporated in the revised material, more exactly in one learning trajectory spanning over six lessons with interrelated topics. Finally, some conclusionary remarks are presented.

REFLECTIONS ON ENGLISH AS A SUBJECT IN AN APPLIED LINGUISTICS FRAMEWORK

The current study can be integrated within the broad domain of Applied Linguistics (AL), which has occupied the centre stage of linguistic or education-related research to a large extent in the last decades (Perry, 2011). AL is primarily equated to the language teaching profession (Richards, 2017, p. 3), including aspects such as the teaching of second, foreign, or additional² languages, policies related to educational matters, language curriculum developments, using a foreign/second language as a medium of instruction (Perry, 2011; Richards, 2017; Conrad et al., 2020), but also to 'newer' focal aspects connected to ideas such as technology-enhanced learning (Sum & Oancea, 2022), mediation, plurilingual/pluricultural competence, modes, genres (Council of Europe, 2020).

Secondly, AL may refer to the research on how language is used in real-world contexts and the influence of psychological or sociological factors in the choices

² This term may refer to *foreign, second official, heritage, autochthonous, community or regional language* (Gabillon, 2020).

speakers make. The common core of this framework can be linked to the idea of language(s) in practice or of how people make use of language (Conrad et al., 2020; Perry, 2011, p. 4). Additionally, analysing things from a(n) inter/multidisciplinary perspective is advocated in the AL tradition (Conrad et al., 2020, p. 6).

Our starting point is concerned with practical applications related to teaching an ESAP course to Biology students. What does ESAP entail more exactly? It surfaced at the confluence of two ways of approaching teaching languages, particularly, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP). ESP first came to light as a response to the necessities of placing students and their particular needs at the centre of curriculum/syllabus design, in the transformative 1950s' context, which gave rise to specific language learning needs. There emerged a new category of learners who needed to use a foreign language in specific academic or professional contexts (Richards, 2017, p. 61-65).

EAP came about as a continuation to these interests sometime around the 1980s, first as a branch of ESP alongside English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) (Dudley-Evans & St John, 2012). It took into account the necessities of tertiary education, which started incorporating English to a higher degree in the context of a rapidly expanding globalizing world, further resulting in its status being 'upgraded' to that of a *lingua franca*, but also in "the loss of scholarly writing in many national cultures" (Hyland, 2006, p. 8). At the foundation of EAP lies the recognition of the fact that students need to operate with a certain text typology, to be able to understand and produce language or text employing a certain style or reproducing specific genres in the academic context and, furthermore, to acquire skills transferrable to their future professional world.

Moreover, with time, EAP further divided into two other approaches, namely English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) and English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP). EGAP sets out to establish the features that can be regarded as common to various disciplines across the curriculum. There are, naturally, varying points of view among researchers regarding what exactly constitutes this set of general characteristics. Some researchers focus on the determination and practice of generic skills seen either as distinct (*narrow view*)³ or as integrated⁴ (*broad view*), (Jordan, 1997). Others consider that a learning approach is the way to go rather than typical texts and practices (Hutchinson & Waters, 1991; cf. Hyland, 2006, p. 10). Other features could be connected to what is nowadays termed *common academic vocabulary*

³ For example, reading for main ideas and supporting details, listening to a monologue, developing reference skills (Dudley-Evans & St John, 2012; Jordan, 1997).

⁴ Note-taking (as an integrated skill) is regarded as complementary to listening or reading and it can serve as a lead-in to speaking or writing.

(identified within the corpus linguistics framework; Coxhead, 2000) or to the ideas of a general academic register, which is the formal, academic style (Jordan, 1997).

ESAP includes the practice of study skills by carrying out tasks relevant to subject-specific contexts in order for the course to be perceived as relevant to students. Though at first sight this perspective seems to come close to the generally advocated learner needs, it has still received criticism. For example, Hutchinson & Waters (1991) consider that the language teacher's job should not be related to teaching specialist vocabulary, one of the main tenets of ESAP. Similar viewpoints are held by other researchers, who state that the language instructor is ill-equipped to deal with subject-specific genres (cf. Hyland, 2006, p. 109).

One of the main aspects characterising the work of the language as subject teacher, since the advent of ESP approaches, has been the urge to develop a working collaboration with the subject specialists. At first, the primary purpose was to conduct the course needs analysis, which later moved towards the idea of 'linking' a specialised language course with a subject-specific one. The former suggestion first occurs within the framework of ESP and can be discussed in terms of establishing students' wants (Hutchinson & Waters, 1991) or the *cooperation* principle (Dudley-Evans & St John, 2012, p. 42-43). In what concerns the latter proposition, it is CLIL that is nowadays typically equated with the delivering of specialist content in a foreign language, binding the two types of courses together.

CLIL has been defined as a bilingual programme in which an additional language is used to learn both content and language. It arose as a result of education's/society's failure to cope with emerging realities, which include(d) the increasing need for global communication. The migrant movements across borders necessitating to be integrated in a new linguistic and cultural context are a case in point. (García and Wei, 2014, p. 76).

Additionally, CLIL has been described as an educational approach which emerged around the 1990s as a consequence of the Council of Europe and the European Commission's work on promoting the acquisition of at least two foreign or community languages (i.e., multilingualism/plurilingualism). It is a multidisciplinary approach, in which subject content is taught in a foreign language with the purpose of enhancing not only the disciplinary content learning, but also learners' linguistic competence. Additionally, it places emphasis on developing lower-⁵ and higher-order⁶ processing skills through engaging students in various tasks.

⁵ i.e., remembering, understanding, applying (Bloom's taxonomy, revised by Anderson and Krathwohl (eds.), 2001 *apud* Gabillon, 2020; Morton, 2020).

⁶ i.e., analysing, evaluating, creating (Bloom's taxonomy, revised by Anderson and Krathwohl (eds.), 2001 *apud* Gabillon, 2020; Morton, 2020).

Team-working in ESAP (Dudley-Evans & St John, 2012, p. 45), as the name suggests, requires the collaboration of the language and subject instructors both in and outside the class. This is similar to the CLIL variant in which the same subject is taught in tandem by the two different instructors. Such CLIL approaches seem to lead to improvements both with respect to specific content and to linguistic aspects, i.e., grammar and vocabulary (Satayev, M. et al., 2022). However, it needs to be mentioned that putting such an approach into practice on a larger scale⁷ might prove more difficult to apply.

In the specialist literature CLIL is divided into two categories according to the aspect it focuses on: “hard” is the content-led variant, while “soft” CLIL is the language-led one. Both have been criticised for concentrating too much on their primary component to the detriment of the other (Meyer et al., 2015a; Morton, 2020). What is interesting to remark is that the language instructor is no longer the (only) one to be scrutinised with respect to his/her subject-specific competence, but the disciplinary teacher him/herself is required to implement language-focused instruction in a sustainable manner⁸, which, similarly, may also raise concerns.

A PTL PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION IN A PLURILINGUAL/MULTILINGUAL AND PLURICULTURAL WORLD

As mentioned previously, the main objective of this paper is to explore if an ESAP course can benefit from a PTL perspective on teaching English. PTL is a model initially developed by a group of researchers titled *the Graz Group*. More specifically, this group belongs to the European Centre for Modern Languages, an institution of the European Union,⁹ the aim of which is to encourage, develop and promote innovation in language education. The results of their research (and of other projects supported by the EU) have been translated into several new guidelines developed by the European Commission (*see* Council of Europe, 2020 or Council of Europe, 2016).

One of the main issues of concern for PTL-related approaches has been the idea of *functional illiteracy*, which is regarded as being the result of education’s inefficiency in operating a deeper learning of various disciplines across the entire system of education. *Deep learning* is postulated to derive from the ability to master

⁷ not for research purposes, at a small-group level and in a project-like contexts.

⁸ “[...] The language dimension in teaching and learning subject matter is equally important to language as subject itself.” (Council of Europe, 2016, p. 23).

⁹ It was founded in 1994, in Graz, Austria (Council of Europe (ECML/CELV), 1994-2024, *About us*).

both *subject-specific literacies* and the *secondary discourse*¹⁰. In other words, linguistic competence is no longer seen as a topic only to be dealt with in language classes (i.e., language as subject), but as a key component in all subject disciplines, which should be promoted as part of a *Language Across the Curriculum (LAC)* policy (Meyer et al., 2015a; Council of Europe, 2016; Morton, 2020). In addition to envisaging language as an *instrument for communication*, whether we interpret it in terms of a set of rules/discourses/genres or as situated communication (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 28), it has been recognised to be an integral part of *knowledge building* in all subjects (Council of Europe, 2016, p. 19).

A similar perspective is rendered in García and Wei's discussion on *translanguaging*, though they position their term as transgressing *bilingualism* and *multilingualism*, terms which, in their view, adopt an "additive" viewpoint on what is perceived as "*autonomous*" languages (2014, p. 12). To me it seems that García and Wei's *translanguaging* is closely related to the notions of *plurilingualism/pluriculturalism*¹¹ or *multilingualism*, which, as mentioned in Council of Europe (2020, p. 31) have been further on developed as pluralistic approaches in the ECML's *Framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures (FREPA/CARAP)*. According to Cenoz (2019), there are two types of translanguaging: *spontaneous* and *pedagogical*. The former occurs in a natural, unplanned way in contexts both outside and inside the classroom, while the latter, as the name suggests, is related to in-class situations arising as the result of a pedagogical strategy, which is something to be exemplified further on.

PTL starts from the premise that education in general needs to concentrate on developing the process of deep learning of subject-specific content, which can only happen through the intermediary of language, and which is reflected in the way this knowledge is articulated. It expands the initial understanding of the notion of *literacy* (referring mostly to the cognitive skills of reading and writing) to an extended definition, including the concept of *attitudes*¹² followed by that of *pluriliteracies*, involving content acquisition in L2/foreign/multiple languages, which is a process believed to foster deeper learning. Additionally, what is important is the signalling and bringing forth of "appropriate academic language use" (Meyer et al., 2015a, p. 43; Council of Europe, 2016, p. 21-25). But what does this use include?

¹⁰ The discourse that is specific to a certain discipline, i.e. *disciplinary literacy* (Meyer et al., 2015a).

¹¹ *Plurilingualism* and *pluriculturalism* are described as being somewhat interrelated terms (Council of Europe, 2020).

¹² It is about first identifying/understanding attitudes as reflected in oral/written texts, then moving further along the knowledge pathway towards critical thinking and engaging in social interactions on a given matter.

In a *functional* understanding of the academic language use (ALU) there are several main aspects to be delineated. ALU is represented by the rather formal variants of language use put in contrast to everyday speech (*register*). Texts typically found in one or the other discipline (categorised in terms of the *genres* to which they belong) are to be selected accordingly. Vocabulary will be an intermixture between *content-specific vocabulary* (e.g. “global warming”, “mitosis”) and *general academic vocabulary* (“prevailing”, “hypothesis”, “leads us to believe”) (Council of Europe, 2016, p. 23-24). The former can be equated with both *technical* and *semi-technical* vocabulary (Coxhead, 2013) as defined in the more linguistic-oriented framework (i.e., ESAP), which can help further refine the language understanding part. The grammatical part can be added to the vocabulary section. In this case reference is made to the typical *grammatical structures/features* encountered in discipline-specific texts (e.g. longer complex sentences, impersonal statements, passive voice), which is something, again, extensively dealt with in the ESAP literature. Finally, *academic language functions/discourse functions*¹³ are pointed out. They are considered to be both linguistic and cognitive in nature, constituting a link “between the pedagogical approaches of dealing with genres and academic ways of thinking, writing and speaking” (Council of Europe, 2016, p. 24).

The most interesting part put forth in PTL approaches is represented by the *cognitive discourse functions* (CDFs), defined in terms of *speech acts as verbal actions* which reflect communicative intentions (Dalton-Puffer, 2013; Meyer et al., 2015a). Dalton-Puffer (2013) proposes a working model of 7 function categories (which contain several possible members), grouped according to the communicative intention they carry (see an adaptation in Tabel 1).

Table 1. List of CDF types, underlying communicative intentions and members¹⁴

Source (adapted): Dalton-Puffer, 2013, p. 234-235

Function Type	Communicative Intention	Label	Members
<i>Type 1</i>	I tell you how we can cut up the world according to certain ideas.	CLASSIFY	classify, compare, contrast, match, structure, categorise, subsume
<i>Type 2</i>	I tell you about the extension of this object of specialist knowledge.	DEFINE	define, identify, characterise
<i>Type 3</i>	I tell you details of what can be seen (also metaphorically).	DESCRIBE	describe, label, identify, name, specify

¹³ This aspect seems to be closely related to *cognitive discourse functions*.

¹⁴ This table will serve as a starting point in planning the ESAP material, since members may be placed in several categories (Dalton-Puffer, 2013), or a text (*genre*) may include several genre moves, i.e., sub-parts of a genre (Meyer et al., 2015b, p. 5).

Function Type	Communicative Intention	Label	Members
<i>Type 4</i>	I tell you what my position is vis a vis X.	EVALUATE	evaluate, judge, argue, justify, take a stance, critique, recommend, comment, reflect, appreciate
<i>Type 5</i>	I give you reasons for and tell you cause/s of X.	EXPLAIN	explain, reason, express cause/effect, draw conclusions, deduce
<i>Type 6</i>	I tell you something that is potential.	EXPLORE	explore, hypothesise, speculate, predict, guess, estimate, simulate, take other perspectives
<i>Type 7</i>	I tell you about sth. external to our immediate context on which I have a legitimate knowledge claim.	REPORT	report, inform, recount, narrate, present, summarise, relate

According to Morton's (2020) model¹⁵ (see Fig. 1), CDFs are placed at the intersection of *content*, *literacy* and *language*.

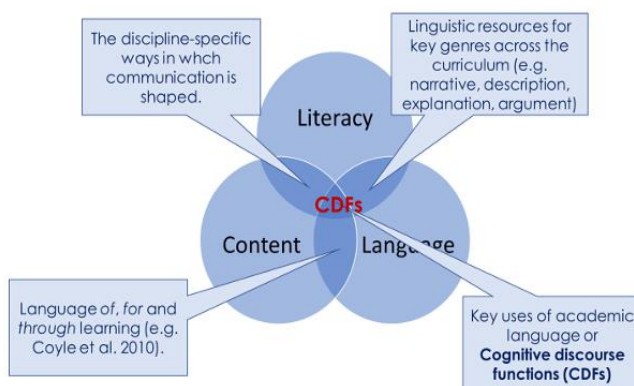


Figure 1. The relationships between content, literacy and language

Source: Morton, 2020, p. 9

Genres, such as description, narration or definition, are located at the intersection of *content* and *literacy*. They can be explained as generalised, typified structures of similar text enactments. Morton (p. 9) prompts CLIL teachers to reveal their inner workings to students, thus enabling them to put the acquired knowledge to work across the curriculum.

At the intersection between *language* and *content* he sets 3 language types:

¹⁵ The model builds on Dalton-Puffer's 2013 study, within a PTL framework.

1. *Language of learning* (the main linguistic focus in CLIL lessons in Morton's opinion) – similar to *content-specific vocabulary*, as per Morton (2020), to which I would add (*general*)¹⁶ *academic vocabulary*

2. *Language for learning* (the language necessary to participate in class activities, e.g. *language of giving opinions, (dis)agreeing*), which Morton claims to be ignored by 'hard' CLIL teachers)

3. *Language through learning* (defined as new, unpredictable language encountered during tasks)

At the intersection between *literacy* and *language*, Morton suggests to include *language rules*, which moves the focus from the general structure of the genre towards the actual language instances, which he describes with reference to *grammar* and *vocabulary* (Morton, 2020, p. 10). This so-called mixture between vocabulary and grammar could also be explained as functional phrases illustrating a specific communicative function. One reason for this interpretation is the consideration that the language we use is phraseological in nature (Morley, 2023, para. 2) and it is something that must be included in material design/teaching to a larger extent.

Finally, a PTL approach to learning postulates that the key to deep learning is about requiring students to process disciplinary-content in texts to be transformed in various styles/registers (e.g. *informal-formal*), modes¹⁷ (e.g. *charts, diagrams, tables* etc.), different languages (*translanguaging activities*), at three levels of knowledge difficulty (*beginner, intermediate* and *advanced*), employing both analogue and digital media (Meyer et al., 2015b).

A PTL PERSPECTIVE ON MATERIAL PLANNING AND DESIGN IN AN ESAP CONTEXT

Some principles to consider when planning or organizing the ESAP material can be derived from those designed for CLIL/content-based teaching. In what follows, a macro-level learning pathway will be presented, part of the material for the first semester of the ESAP course, pointing out some PTL principles to consider when designing or planning such courses.

One principle would be *establishing a small number of objectives* (Morton, 2020) in each teaching unit (TU) and individual lesson. In the course designed each

¹⁶ Cf. Hyland & Polly (2007) for a discussion on the extent to which there is a *general* academic vocabulary.

¹⁷ in a multimodal approach

teaching unit has the same topic and is composed of two lessons, each of which addresses that topic from two distinct but complementary points of view¹⁸. *Objectives could be expressed in terms of CDFs*, though they do not specify precisely the language students should concentrate on (Morton, 2020, p. 11). Naturally, each learning activity (i.e., exercise/task) itself has its own objective, but the point made is *to determine only one aim/lesson* that the teacher needs to follow through. Given the ESAP context, the next step would be *setting the language objectives*. They include both individual items viewed as Vocabulary (V) and/or Grammar (G) and functional phrases/academic language functions/discourse functions (to which I will henceforth be referring as *language functions* (LF)). The latter are interpreted as representing CDFs in their verbalised form.

The first teaching unit focusing on specialised content is about the *Diversity of Life*. In the first lesson a first *mode (input)* used is a (short) written text on Evolutionary Biology, accompanied by a diagram showing the levels of taxonomic hierarchy for *a dog*. The text includes a presentation on Linnaeus' hierarchical taxonomy. The first steps taken in relation to the reading part are consistent with a typical reading comprehension activity (*true/false*, *multiple-choice* and vocabulary questions). Next, an extension speaking activity is designed with the purpose of deepening understanding of the topic and related language in a new, *critical thinking* context (*integrated skill approach*). Students are asked to work in groups and answer questions such as "Why is it important to continually update taxonomic classifications?" or "Discuss the significance of recognising Archaea as a distinct domain."

The reading text is also used to open the pathway towards the *LF objective* of the lesson. Although the first idea that may come up to mind is that we should be dealing with classification, in reality such a text can also serve as an introduction to definitions, for definitions can also be regarded as a sub-genre of classification¹⁹. Specifying *the language objectives* also implicates choosing among several items/structures that may appear in the input text. In this case, the focus relative to vocabulary will be on technical terms, such as *genus*, *species*, *phylum*, with the grammatical aspect closely related to it being the irregular plural of nouns, *genus-genera*, *species-species*, *phylum-phyla*). However, since in the case of *formal sentence definitions* our focus is on the *simple three-part definition*, with defining relative

¹⁸ Though I believe that more time is needed to ensure deep learning of aspects related to a given topic, allocating more than two lessons for the same topic would lead to students losing interest in it.

¹⁹ When you classify, you need to define items and get them organised in a category according to established criteria.

clauses serving as the linguistic support, relative clauses will constitute the main *grammatical objective*.

The aim of the first lesson with respect to the LF is for students to be able to write three-part sentence definitions using *the typical structure of defining relative clauses* (An X = *the term* is/may be defined as a Y = *the class* + *relative adverb/pronoun* + distinguishing characteristics.). Students are presented with a task requiring them to distinguish among various types of definitions (*formal/canonical*, *semi-formal* definition, *non-formal definitions*) starting from some examples.

e.g. (1) Are the following sentences definitions? Why? / Why not? In what contexts could these sentences be used? Think in terms of *oral* vs. *written*, *formal* vs. *informal*. [...]²⁰

The following part consists in some exercises in which the main aspects of a “grammar of definitions” (Swales & Feak (1994) are highlighted (e.g. irregular plurals, usage of indefinite article with countable nouns and of the zero article with uncountable ones). Even though the time allotted is restricted, it is here, in the ESAP lesson, that clarifications should be made regarding the relevant grammatical aspects involved in the target LF.

The second lesson of *The Diversity of Life* TU contains several learning activities, which are designed to lead students towards the general lesson aim, *Comparing/Contrasting prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells*, included in the CLASSIFY *function type*. First, students need to be able to identify (sub-genre of DEFINE) the two cells’ various constituents (i.e., learn the technical/specialised words relating to these parts). This was designed as a two-part learning activity for each type of cell. The prokaryotic cell-related activities are presented below:

e.g. (2) The figure below²¹ shows the generalised structure of a prokaryotic cell. Find the appropriate place for the following constituents: *cell wall*, *cell membrane*, *ribosome(s)*, *flagellum*, *pili*, *capsule*, *chromosome (DNA)*, *nucleoid region*.

e.g. (3) Build up a *Prokaryotic cell* glossary of English-Romanian terms by starting from the picture provided below (Fig. 2). Access the provided link for the Romanian variant.

²⁰ For examples and explanations see Nashaat-Sobhy & Llinares (2020, p. 4).

²¹ Adapted picture used - see link.

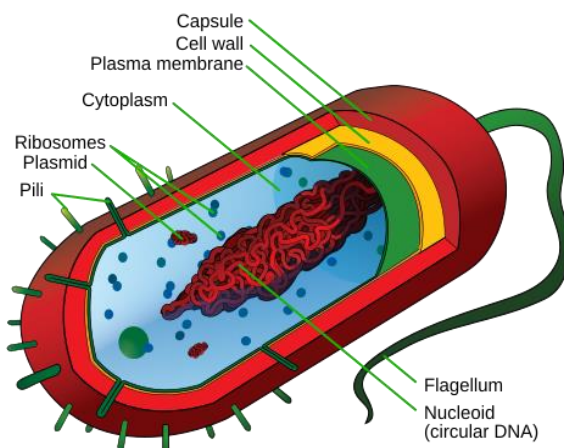


Figure 2. The average prokaryotic cell

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Average_prokaryote_cell-_en.svg

The glossary activity is an example of how a simple *translanguaging strategy* can be put into application, starting from the idea of *a more flexible approach to learning*, in the sense that the ‘target’ language is not the only one to be regarded as acceptable in class (García and Wei, 2014, p. 59). Since the actual content addressed poses difficulties in some cases, this type of activity gives students the opportunity to delve deeper into the content matter in both languages by the provision of the L1 text.

The next step in the second lesson is an introductory overview of the cell structure in the form of a language activity developed starting from a tapescript of a *YouTube* video (*Overview of cell structure*). The text is retrieved in written form and a multiple-choice activity is designed. It highlights the selection of the appropriate specialised/academic word in the given context (see e.g. (4) below). At the end of the activity, students are asked to listen to/watch the *YouTube* part and check their answers. The multiple-step activity involves *two modes* (written and audio/video), which follows the (PTL) *multimodality principle*, ensuring a deeper learning.

e.g. (4) All cells have a cell membrane, which _____ (1) the inside of the cell from its environment.

a. separates b. distinguishes c. divides d. merges

If in the previous lesson students were exposed to the three-part sentence definition and to the typical structure of relative clauses, now the language aspects of the DEFINITION are treated as a sub-genre move in the CLASSIFY function type. This way *additional LF practice can be undertaken in a varied context*, which,

pedagogically speaking, should lead to maintaining student engagement. A definition-related activity was designed, this time relative to *reducing relative clauses* (*different verbalisation of the LF related to Defining*).



The next activity (e.g. (5)) involves making notes on the similarities and differences between prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells in table format.

e.g. (5) Make notes of the main aspects that are similar/different in the two types of cells:

Prokaryotic cell	Eukaryotic cell	SIMILAR/DIFFERENT
e.g. YES/NO - cell membrane	YES/NO - cell membrane	SIMILAR
YES/NO - membrane-bound organelles (including the nucleus)	YES/NO - membrane-bound organelles (including the nucleus)	...
...	...	

The following step consists of a guided rephrasing activity (writing – *productive* skill) which focuses on the comparing/contrasting language structures established in the G(rammar) part (*see* Table 2, Appendix 1). The homework assignment (e.g. (6)) requires students to write a comparison/contrast paragraph (for which a three-part structure is provided). The last two activities can be seen as *partially guided practice in that certain language structures are required to be used*. This could be one strategy ensuring *a deeper learning of the language structures* selected.

e.g. (6) Write a paragraph comparing prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells. (150-200 words). Include three language structures (highlighting them in your text) from the following list: *similar to, in contrast to, despite, although, unlike, like, in that*.

Additionally, individual work exercises are provided focusing on language related to cell structure, such as matching organelles with their function, activity of the type *Fill in the blanks, Game* –  Cell organelle memory match or a simulation –  Comparing Four Cells: Animal, Plant, Bacteria, Yeast, the focus of which is rather on content than language. These are some examples of how technology can be integrated within the course. The principle to bear in mind regarding technology is that *digital tools are to be selected and integrated in the course in connection to language/content deep-learning goals* (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014, p. 33, p. 45).

The next two lessons belonging to the teaching unit *Cell transport* focus on the DESCRIBE function type. The twofold teaching unit design (applied throughout the syllabus) serves not only to offer students the opportunity to focus on the same topic (*cell transport* in TU2) viewed from different angles, but also *to add on the previously*

introduced content knowledge (from a previous TU). In this example, the broader LF - *Describing a cellular process* – may consist of the typical structure (here at paragraph level), specialised terminology (technical/semi-technical terms), specific academic sequencers and academic phrases. So, what to focus on and to what extent? I will briefly sketch the approach designed for this part.

First, in lesson 3 a *Checkpoint* activity has been included in the form of a Quiz on the functions of organelles²². Its purpose is to check to what extent students have undertaken the individual study activities on this topic. Next, the lesson moves towards the topic of *Cell transport*. Students' knowledge on the two different types of transport, active and passive, is checked by means of a discussion. This activity also serves to bring an online Biology dictionary in English to students' attention by asking them to work in groups and extract distinct relevant definitions. Notes can be changed afterwards (*collaborative task*). The next activity is a language-oriented one, requiring students to find derived forms of given words from a short text on cell membranes. Such *language-oriented activities* not only focus on the language *per se*, but also introduce students to relevant content knowledge in the target language.

In another activity students are instructed to complete a diagram starting from a text on the *Structure and function of cell membranes*, which first aims at developing reading skills but later on serves as input for the next translanguageing activity, in which students are required to translate a text from Romanian into English. This translation text contains *several descriptive phrases that can be retrieved from the previous reading activity* (phrases underlined there). Both texts are accompanied by a diagram showing the structure of the cell membrane first in English and then in Romanian. This is a concrete example of the *translanguageing teaching practice of "deliberately changing the language of input and the language of output"* (García and Wei, 2014, p. 64), task which involves not just finding parallel words/phrases but deep cognitive processes in both languages. Other activities (*Listening activity, Definition formation*) follow, on which we will not dwell here, only to end the class with an *Unjumble the sentences* task, relating to a short description of the process of *Pinocytosis*. This activity would be ranged at the *intermediate knowledge level* postulated by the PTL approaches. Higher-order knowledge tasks will be developed in the next lesson.

The second lesson on *Cell transport* is a follow-up to the previous lesson. First, we have a short introduction to the description of *Endocytosis* focusing on academic verbs in the Passive Voice. Next, students are required to paraphrase a short description of the process *Phagocytosis* by using some of the sequencers discussed


²² Site idea source: Woike, A. (n.d.).


in the previous lesson, which is a strategy in practice for *recycling linguistic academic knowledge in a new context*.

The next activity (e.g. (7)) is an application of *the principle of scaffolding*, which is “about optimising learner development through *appropriate forms of mediation*” (Meyer et al. 2015b, p. 12), and which also integrates the use of technology by asking two groups of students to *use a digital tool to create a common topic quiz starting from distinct sources*. As it can be seen in Table 2, students are also made aware of *Nominalisation*, a typical academic feature (through an awareness-raising activity starting from an example extracted from an input text). In terms of individual study, students are required to write their own paragraph on an example of *Passive transport* this time (structure provided, based on Oshima & Hogue, 2007).

e.g. (7)

Step 1: Create a 5-question quiz (with answers) alongside a vocabulary list (5+ specific terms). Use <https://www.purposegames.com/create> to create your quiz:

A. Active Transport – Endocytosis (Source 1 to be consulted –  [here](#))

B. Active Transport – Endocytosis (Source 2 to be consulted –  [here](#))

Step 2. Each group presents their quiz to the other group. Provide feedback, where necessary.

The next two lessons are the final examples of this learning pathway. This time the topic relates to *extremophiles* which are organisms living in hostile conditions to most earth life forms. They belong to the Archaea domain, to which reference was also made in the first TU. This time, integrated *study skills* are first put to work in an activity which brings into discussion how the classification into three domains came about (*The endosymbiotic theory*). Students need to watch a video lecture on the given topic and take notes, after having been familiarised with several ways of note-taking (*tree diagrams, flowcharts, headings and notes, spidergrams, tables, timelines, two-column tables*). A follow-up collaborative task requires students to prepare a short presentation on the evolution of eukaryotes.

Next, students are introduced to the category of *extremophiles*, containing representatives from all three domains. Through some language-focused activities, they are shown how affixes are used to inform on the type of environment they live in (e.g. thermophile; thermo-). Here, in a guided inquiry activity, students are asked to explain which of two given paragraphs is a classification and which is a description, thus being provided with *samples*, in accordance with one of the principles mentioned in the literature which specifies that *multilingual learners are to*

be provided with (linguistic) models. (Cenoz, 2019, p. 76). Other language activities (in-class/individual study) are also available in this part of the material.

The last lesson in this learning pathway is rather an action-oriented one, which entails that less focus is placed on language aspects, and more on undertaking a more complex task (e.g. (8)). First, students are asked to work on a language-oriented exercise about *Fundamental and Applied Relevance of Extremophiles (Fill in the blanks)*. This language-oriented activity provides them with some background knowledge concerning what research on extremophiles currently focuses on. Next, the task in e.g. (8) is handled:

e.g. (8) Prepare a poster (1 page - A4) or 2-4 PowerPoint slides for an oral presentation at a popularisation convention with the purpose of attracting funds for your research on an extremophile out of the two:

A. *Riftia pachyptila*, the giant tube worm

versus

B. The tardigrade

- Describe it – include details about a short physical description selecting the most relevant details to your argumentation.
- Present scientific / biotechnological / commercial / human health applications that research on it could have.

At the end of this activity, you will need to make a 5-minute presentation. Teach some interesting words/expressions you've encountered.

What needs to be mentioned is that such complex in-class tasks *assigned at the end of a learning pathway* are designed with the intention of repurposing language and content knowledge acquired throughout several lessons. However, being a task activity found at the extreme level of the fluency spectrum, the actual language/content that is being used by students is no longer controllable. Asking students to focus on extracting some language aspects and then teaching them can promote *language awareness* as part of their *autonomous learning skill development*. Naturally, time allowing, some other language (*compound adjectives*) and structural aspects (on this type of *description*) may be tackled afterwards (similar to the three stages in task-based learning: *pre-task, task cycle, language focus*²³).

As a final note, the idea of guided learning through a variety of activities, culminating with a more complex task (at the end of a learning trajectory) is put forward. Class implementation of the task was opted for because this is more appropriate for first-year undergraduate students, especially during the first semester of their studies. Table 2 provides a summary of the *Learning pathway 1* –

²³ Willis (2001).

Describing organisms, interpreted as a broader type of description, which would include several genre moves, treated in the individual lessons as distinct genres: *definition, classification, physical and/or habitat description, exploring relevance for research*.

CONCLUSIONS

PTL's principles bring about many useful principles or strategies which, as indicated above, can be put into practice in an ESAP context. This type of educational endeavour is complex in that it involves the introduction of academic, specialised terminology and typical phrases together with subject content. However, the main learning goals in an ESAP context should revolve around the deeper learning not so much of the subject-content, but of the language associated to it, though the students will also benefit regarding their disciplinary knowledge. Many facets can be dealt with by developing learning pathways, revolving around interconnected disciplinary topics. This spiral learning allows for additional layers of language and meaning to be added, connected with a certain topic.

What is also illustrated in the present paper is that the lesson's main aim can be postulated relative to CDFs as suggested in PTL, but also that an ESAP course will need to take the next step by specifying and then focusing on the lesson's language objectives. They further specify lesson aims in terms of vocabulary and grammar items and as language functions interpreted as the 'verbalised' CDFs. Since both time and student knowledge level need to be taken into account, the PTL's postulation that the primary focus of collaborative tasks is not language, but action taking could be applied at a macro-level in our context, as shown. The language-oriented activities can be based on texts which also provide content knowledge to be useful for future action-oriented ones. Finally, while peer feedback may relate to the content assessed, the ESAP teacher's feedback should still mainly be about linguistic and rhetorical aspects.

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APPENDIX 1

Table 2. Learning pathway 1 – Describing organisms

TEACHING UNIT (TU)	INDIVIDUAL LESSON	Category Label	Overall lesson aim (as CDF)	Language objectives: V+G + LF
I. The Diversity of Life (1)	1. Sentence Definitions	DEFINE	<i>Defining various categories of life</i>	V - technical terms referring to classification levels in the Linnaeus' taxonomic classification G - defining relative clauses LF – Define – at sentence level: <u>Define various categories of life using the simple three-part sentence structure.</u>
I. The Diversity of Life (2)	2. Comparing and Contrasting	CLASSIFY	<i>Comparing/Contrasting prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells</i>	V – eukaryotic and prokaryotic cell parts (e.g. mitochondria, Golgi apparatus, nucleus - technical terms) G – unlike/like + noun phrase, in contrast to/similar to + noun phrase, in that + clause LF – Comparative/Contrastive definitions – at paragraph level: <u>Compare/contrast prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells by using the selected grammatical structures.</u>
II. Cell Transport (1)	3. Describing a Process	DESCRIBE	<i>Describing active transport in cells</i>	V – names for active and passive transport types (e.g. endocytosis, exocytosis, osmosis etc.), parts of the cell membrane (e.g. phospholipid bilayer, hydrophilic heads - technical terms), descriptive phrases (e.g. serve as barriers, (membranes are) loaded with (proteins), go through the lipid bilayer – semitechnical vocabulary G – sequencers and equivalent phrases (e.g. firstly/the first stage is, previously, at the same time, finally) – general academic language LF – Describe the pinocytosis process <u>by using sequencers.</u> (paragraph level)

TEACHING UNIT (TU)	INDIVIDUAL LESSON	Category Label	Overall lesson aim (as CDF)	Language objectives: V+G + LF
II. Cell Transport (2)	4. Nominalisation	DESCRIBE/ LABEL	<i>Describing active/passive transport in cells</i>	V – academic words describing processes (e.g. <i>function, identify, transport, eliminate</i>) specific verbs describing cellular processes (e.g. <i>engulf, fuse, release, pinch off</i>) G – (Present Tense) Passive Voice LF – <i>Describe the processes of endocytosis/osmosis/diffusion by using passive voice.</i> (paragraph level)
III. Extreme Environments and Extremophiles (1)	5. Classifying	CLASSIFY	<i>Classifying extremophiles</i>	V – technical words identifying extremophiles (e.g. <i>thermophile, halophobe, metalotolerant</i>) G – affixes (e.g. <i>-phile, -phobe, halo-</i>) LF – Classify extremophiles <u>by using appropriate terminology.</u> (paragraph level)
III. Extreme Environments and Extremophiles (2)	6. Descriptions	DESCRIBE	<i>Describing extremophiles/extreme environments</i>	V – Descriptive academic words (about position, weight, structure, colour, composition, size, shape, function) G – Compound adjectives (<i>metal-contaminated, metal-rich</i>) LF – Describe an extremophile <u>by including arguments for its research being funded.</u> (paragraph level)

SECȚIUNEA 3

Limbajele de specialitate în contextul traductologiei

Translating Medical and Technical Texts – A Didactic Approach

GABRIELLA KOVÁCS¹

Abstract: With the development of technology, engineering and health sciences, the demand for the translation of medical and technical texts has increased significantly. Translations play an important role in disseminating new knowledge, inventions and discoveries. Translating texts belonging to these domains requires a variety of skills. In our study, we assess the extent to which Translation and Interpretation students at Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania are able to translate medical and technical texts from English into their mother tongue (Hungarian). With the purpose of curriculum development, we examine our students' attitude related to becoming technical or medical translators. We also examine whether the lack of medical or technical knowledge affects the work of translators and what strategies can be used in translation in the absence of this expertise.

Keywords: *translator training; medical texts; technical texts; specialized translation*

INTRODUCTION

Given the rapid advancements in technology, the growing market for new technologies in the domain of engineering, and an increasing need for disseminating medical knowledge and new treatments in the domain of health services, there is a significant demand for both technical and medical translations. Consequently, those who are equipped to meet the challenges of technical and medical translation may find more job and career opportunities upon graduation. This explains the need to integrate more extensive knowledge and practical training in the fields of technical and medical communication within translator training programs. Therefore, the Translation and Interpretation study program of our university (Department of Applied Linguistics of *Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania*, Faculty of Technical and Human Sciences, Târgu Mureş) offers a practical course in technical and medical translation in the final (third) year of

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training. The purpose of this practical course is to offer an introduction into specialized translations related to these fields.

In our experience most students opting to study Applied Modern Languages show a preference for working with general or literary texts over technical, medical or other specialized ones. Students who choose translator training often prefer to specialize mainly in humanistic domains, and they are less enthusiastic about topics related to scientific subjects such as Mathematics, Physics, Biology or Chemistry. Within the domain of specialized languages both technical and medical texts can be highly specialized, they may refer to a large variety of subdomains of the field and belong to different genres, hence their understanding may cause difficulties even for specialists who are not trained and experienced in the specific sub-branch to which a text belongs.

In this study, we focus on the examination of our students' proficiency in translating medical and technical texts from English into Hungarian (their native language). Additionally, with the help of a questionnaire, we analyse the translator trainees' attitudes towards translating medical or technical texts and pursuing careers as technical or medical translators. We propose to investigate the impact of insufficient medical or technical knowledge on translation performance and explore the strategies that can be employed in the absence of such knowledge.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MEDICAL TEXTS AND THEIR TRANSLATION

Medical language, like other specialized languages, is stratified based on the context and situation of its use. This stratification involves three interconnected user levels: the academic or scientific language, characterized by theoretical aspects; the professional common language, used in everyday professional practice; and the language of mediation, which conveys scientific and professional results to laypersons (Roelcke, 2002).

When medical professionals (doctors, nurses) communicate with non-professionals (patients and their relatives), they must use clear, less specialized and understandable language. Miscommunications can lead to patient dissatisfaction, inadequate treatments, or legal disputes (Pilling, 2008; Youngson, 2017). The clarity of medical documentation (e.g., clinical findings, medical letters, hospital discharge forms, reports, prescriptions) is crucial for successful treatments and also the patients' safety and satisfaction. Communication with patients should contain less complex medical terms or provide explanations when such terms first appear (Gotti, 2008).

The user levels mentioned before are interlinked, and the language used in medical documentation, including abbreviations and acronyms, can complicate communication even among professionals. Professional communication in documents such as doctor's notes, case studies, lab results, imaging reports, biopsy reports, insurance forms, medical history reports, information leaflets for patients, hospital discharge summaries and others relies heavily on specialized terms familiar to professional users. The common professional language used by the medical staff varies with context, often intertwining with academic writing and style or the language of mediation. Standard types of medical texts, like referrals, require specific information such as the patient's name, time and place of birth, address, diagnosis, recommended or received treatment etc. (Kuna & Ludányi, 2018). Theoretical, academic, or scientific language represents the highest level of abstraction in the domain of professional languages, characterized by specific terminological issues, speech events, and types of discourse. This language is prevalent in studies, articles, monographs, scientific presentations and medical education, typically featuring specialized terminology and syntactic elements such as long sentences, nominalization, the use of third-person, passive forms (Askehave & Zethsen, 2000).

Medical translation is used in various subject areas, including first aid, medical rescue, surgery, oncology, pharmacology, obstetrics, pediatrics, internal medicine, cardiology, psychiatry and related fields like law and administration. Medical texts cover a wide range of genres, subjects and topics, including books, presentations, clinical guidelines, grant proposals, health surveys, press releases, news articles, research articles, conference volumes, pharmaceutical advertisements, protocols, regulatory documents, case studies, patient consent forms, discharge notes, patient information brochures, and others.

Karwacka (2015) states that medical translation is a complex phenomenon influenced by linguistic, scientific, sociocultural and economic factors. Translating medical texts is challenging, and translators must recognize the significant responsibility in this work.

Translation errors in scientific articles and presentations may affect an author's reputation. Healthcare services may be adversely influenced, if translation (or interpretation) is misleading either for a physician or a patient, or if vital piece of medical information fails to be translated accurately and, as a result, a patient's condition may not be diagnosed or treated properly. (Karwacka, 2014, p. 20)

Communication failures between patients and healthcare professionals or between professionals in extreme cases may lead to life- or health-threatening

situations. Leonardi (2022) mentions examples when the overrated trust in machine translation or the use of bilingual employees instead of professional translators led to erroneous use of medical equipment, causing severe implications upon the involved patients' health, or resulted in their deaths. Inaccuracies in written medical documentation can also have significant economic and legal consequences, extending beyond the risk to human life. These may include financial losses for pharmaceutical companies, rejection of medication authorizations, liability risks from improper usage of medical devices, and compromised validity of studies and clinical trials. Therefore, accuracy is crucial in medical translations, as arbitrary changes, omissions, or reinterpretations of content can lead to serious complications for both patients and the writers of the texts.

CHARACTERISTICS OF TECHNICAL TEXTS AND THEIR TRANSLATION

Similarly to medical language, technical texts can also be stratified according to the context and situation of their use. Their stratification also involves three interconnected user levels: the scientific or academic language, focusing on more theoretical aspects; the common language used by the professionals in the field such as engineers and technicians in their daily professional practice; and the language used for mediation, transmitting scientific and professional results to non-professionals.

Technical writing encompasses a variety of genres, each distinguished by its unique characteristics. Examples include articles, reports, studies, presentations, forms, tenders, contracts, user manuals, repair manuals, technological procedures, product brochures, administration guides, design briefs, operational procedures, proposals, feasibility studies, safety regulations and others. These genres have distinct structures and sets of features. For example, user manuals in technical writing are designed to assist users in understanding and using a product or service efficiently. They feature clear, concise language and are well-organized with a logical flow, often including a table of contents, sections, and subsections. Manuals are user-centric, offering comprehensive, accurate information. They incorporate visual aids like diagrams and illustrations for clarity, and present instructions in a step-by-step format, highlighting warnings and safety information. Additionally, they may include troubleshooting sections, FAQs, an index, and a glossary to aid navigation and understanding. They may also provide regulatory and legal information.

A fundamental requirement for any translation is that the translated text accurately reflects the source text. In technical translation, this responsibility is even more critical, as omissions and mistranslations can damage the production or the products, or even pose risks to human health.

To effectively translate technical texts, translators must understand the characteristics of technical documents. Generally, these texts target specific audiences, such as engineers, technicians, machine and equipment owners, administrator or managers, machine operators, and also scientific researchers. They are written with the target reader's characteristics in mind, including job, experience, tasks, possible problems and objectives. Technical texts have a utilitarian, specialized focus, often explaining specific technologies to users. They are frequently the product of teamwork, involving technical writers, subject matter experts, editors, usability specialists, illustrators, designers, and translators (Byrne, 2014).

Technical translation often suffers from misconceptions that may undermine its recognition and status. Byrne (2006) addresses six such misconceptions by comparing them with the realities of the field. Firstly, technical translation is frequently mistaken to include disciplines like economics, law, and business and others. These are all different domains of specialized translation, and technical translation cannot be considered a synonym of specialized translation. Technical translation pertains specifically to texts involving technology and natural sciences. Secondly, it is wrongly assumed that technical translation is solely about terminology. Although terminology is significant, the actual writing process of technical texts is equally important. Another misconception is that style is irrelevant in technical translation, implying that technical translators have inferior writing skills. In reality, style is crucial in technical translation, as it involves precise word choice and sentence construction to convey information effectively. Furthermore, technical translation is mistakenly seen as non-creative, merely a reproduction process. Contrarily, technical translators must be innovative in finding linguistic solutions to ensure accurate and culturally appropriate communication. Another misbelief is that technical translators must be experts in highly specialized fields. With an understanding of the principles, some subject knowledge and adept research skills, translators may perform proficiently. Lastly, the misconception that technical translation is only about conveying specialized information overlooks the necessity for accuracy, completeness, and clarity, ensuring that the information is understandable and usable for the reader.

Klein (1983) established some key principles for technical translators to adhere to. The foremost principle is understanding the text, which, for non-

specialist translators, entails comprehending the argument, logical steps of experiments, and process stages. Secondly, information gathering is crucial for enhancing understanding, achieved through reading specialized literature in the target language, observing and examining technical apparatuses and machinery, and engaging with specialists to discuss processes and vocabulary. Effective communication with experts, especially clients, is essential for accurate translations in both form and content. Thirdly, finding and using precise terminology is imperative, verifying unfamiliar terms to ensure accuracy.

Kingscott (2002) foresaw essential changes and emerging trends in technical translation, emphasizing the need for technical translators to be trained in five key disciplines:

- technical writing: translators must function as technical writers, efficiently operating in and across two languages;
- communication theory: understanding the purpose of a text and the nuances of cross-cultural communication is crucial, as different cultures interpret messages differently;
- controlled language: adhering to specific rules and using a restricted vocabulary minimizes ambiguity in translations;
- software localisation: originating from IT, localization has transformed the translation industry - it requires working almost in tandem with source text development, necessitating high competency in IT and the use of translation memory systems to speed up the process;
- content management: technical translation is increasingly interconnected with documentation, communication, and information activities.

BENEFITS AND RISKS OF MACHINE TRANSLATION (MT) IN MEDICAL AND TECHNICAL DOMAINS

Information and communications technology (ICT) and the related competencies have become integral to translators' work. Translation is now predominantly computer- and internet-based, with resources such as word-processing software, machine translation (MT), online dictionaries, educational videos, and computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools. Despite MT's limitations in terms of comprehensibility, structure, accuracy, and cultural nuances, it offers advantages like the availability of a large number of languages, speed, and cost-effectiveness. Recent advancements in MT have improved its effectiveness for

certain language pairs and text types, aiding translators by reducing their workload to primarily reviewing and correcting MT output.

Zappatone and Ruggieri (2024) conducted a thorough research regarding the use of MT in the healthcare sector. They concluded that the necessity of thorough post-editing by human experts, along with pre-editing, is essential. Although MT is not yet fully capable of replacing translators and interpreters in the domain of medical content, this limitation can be addressed by integrating MT as a complementary tool in healthcare practices rather than as a substitute. The effectiveness of this integration largely depends on the type of communication: for asynchronous communication, the combination of MT and post-editing can achieve satisfactory translation quality. However, for synchronous communication, MT should be reserved for lower-risk content. Additionally, it is important to explore less common language combinations to enhance language inclusiveness within the healthcare sector.

MT for technical texts offers significant benefits, including speed, cost-effectiveness, consistent use of terminology, 24/7 availability, and integration with computer-assisted translation tools. However, it also presents notable risks such as potential mistranslations, lack of contextual understanding, and the necessity for human post-editing to ensure accuracy. Moreover, MT may struggle with complex technical jargon and idiomatic expressions, and it lacks the specialized domain expertise, which can lead to significant inaccuracies in translating highly specialized documentation. Therefore, while MT can enhance efficiency, its limitations necessitate careful oversight and integration with human expertise for high-quality translations. According to Tavares et al. (2023), high-quality training is essential for developing various competencies critical to a technical translator's success, including proficiency in using MT, to address the growing demands of the translation industry.

If we take into consideration all the requirements for producing adequate medical or technical translations, we may conclude that a successful medical or technical translator requires a diverse set of skills, including:

- language skills: advanced proficiency in both the source and target languages;
- medical/technical knowledge: the necessary level of expertise and experience in the relevant subject area;
- medical/technical writing skills: the ability to communicate effectively in writing to meet the needs of target readers;
- active learning: openness and ability to engage with new materials;

- cultural familiarity: understanding the culture, customs, and protocols of the target audience;
- editing and proofreading skills: the ability to edit, proofread, standardize, and revise translations prepared by others;
- information and communications technology skills;
- product inspection: skills to critically inspect and evaluate the quality of the final translation;
- research skills: the capability to gather and identify essential information;
- structuring and organization skills: the ability to organize and finalize the translated text to ensure clarity, proper style, accurate terminology, and conciseness;
- synthesizing and reorganizing skills: the ability to integrate and reorganize information.

These competencies may collectively enable medical or technical translators to produce accurate, clear, and culturally appropriate translations.

OUR TARGET GROUP'S TRAINING AND THEIR PERSPECTIVES ON BECOMING SPECIALIZED TRANSLATORS

The target group of this study consisted of 24 undergraduate students enrolled in the Translation and Interpretation program. Their native language is Hungarian, and their English proficiency level varies between B2 and C1. It is important to mention that this undergraduate program includes mainly subjects related to general translation and it does not aim to train specialized translators. However, some courses within the program (a course in specialized languages and a course in terminology followed by a practical course in specialized translation) provide translator trainees with a basic understanding of the characteristics and translation techniques for specialized texts. If they aspire to become specialized translators in the medical, technical or any other specialized domains, additional study and practice are required to obtain the certification and accreditation as specialized translators.

Graduates of Translation and Interpretation programs cannot obtain authorization and become certified translators in Romania without a specific examination administered by the Ministry of Culture. The examination can be taken in various domains, including electronics and telecommunications, mathematical sciences, informatics, agriculture, chemistry, physics, technology, art, religion, philosophy, economic sciences, geography, history, legal sciences, literature,

medicine and pharmacy, political science and sociology. During the examination, the use of machine translation or internet sources is not allowed, candidates may only use a printed bilingual dictionary. Consequently, candidates who have studied applied linguistics but lack prior work experience or training in the chosen specialized field face considerable limitations in their chances of success.

In our practical course dedicated to medical and technical translation, we use texts of various types, genres, and levels of specialization related to medicine and engineering. We also use the sample texts related to these domains from the candidate's guide for the translator exam, published by the Ministry of Culture (Blănaru & Romanic, 2018), in order to illustrate the difficulty level of these examinations.

This study presents our students' attitudes towards translating medical and technical texts, the strategies they employed during the translation process, and the difficulties encountered, based on a questionnaire. Additionally, we present the analysis of a selection of their translations in order to assess their performance and identify the most frequently encountered difficulties.

TRANSLATOR TRAINEES' ATTITUDE RELATED TO THE TRANSLATION OF MEDICAL AND TECHNICAL TEXTS

We designed a questionnaire in order to acquire a deeper understanding of our students' attitude and needs concerning the translation of medical and technical texts, and also their interest in becoming specialized translators in these domains. As mentioned previously, a total of 24 students from the Translation and Interpretation program participated in the survey, which comprised seven questions. The questions were designed based on our previous discussions with students. Understanding students' attitudes can reveal how interested they are in these fields, which often require more attention to detail, knowledge of specialized terminology, and understanding of subject matter, so a positive attitude may indicate greater motivation to develop the necessary skills. The survey can also help in curriculum development in order to enhance their learning experience.

The initial question addressed the students' future aspirations and intentions, inquiring whether they wished to pursue careers as medical or technical translators. The students could choose from five possible responses (I would like to become a medical translator/I would like to become a technical translator/Both specializations are acceptable for me/I do not want to work in these domains/I do not know yet)

and they were also asked to explain their choices. The distribution of the respondents' choices is illustrated in Figure 1.

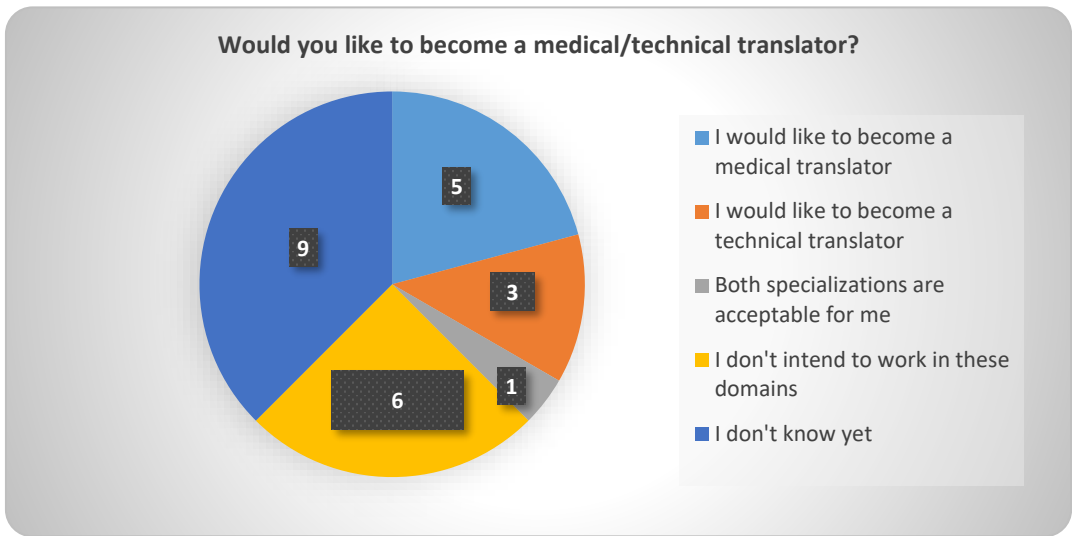


Figure 1. Students' preference of becoming medical/technical translators

As it can be seen, the majority of students were uncertain or unwilling to pursue a career as medical or technical translators. The students who expressed an interest in becoming technical translators referred to the following reasons: the profitable nature of the profession (2 students); the intellectually stimulating and potentially interesting challenges posed by technical texts (1 student); a personal interest in engineering and information technology (1 student); and already having a degree in engineering (1 student). Translator trainees aspiring to become medical translators provided the following explanations for this choice: the financial benefits associated with medical translation; the availability of online resources and machine translation tools to assist with potential challenges in translating medical texts (3 students); the intellectually stimulating and interesting nature of healthcare-related texts (1 student); their experience in healthcare (1 student); and a personal interest in healthcare topics (1 student).

One student chose both possibilities, because he prefers to be flexible and open to job opportunities, ready to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to any domain where he chooses to work.

Respondents who did not envision translating medical or technical texts in their future careers provided the following explanations: they believe they would never become proficient with medical/technical procedures and processes and the associated terminology (5 students); both domains are vast, with numerous sub-

branches, and even professionals like doctors or engineers might struggle with texts outside their specialization (2 students). Medical and technical texts can be excessively complex and challenging to understand (3 students). Additionally, the high level of risk and responsibility involved in translating medical or technical documents may become a significant issue (4 students). Some students are more interested in other areas such as literary translation, audiovisual translation, or translating specialized texts from other domains. Furthermore, some of them do not plan to pursue careers as translators at all. While some expressed interest in translating technical or health-related texts aimed at the general public, covering topics like news about the introduction of new technology or the advantages of a new machine or equipment, general wellbeing, diet, lifestyle, or disease prevention, they are not inclined to translate scientific, academic or highly specialized medical or technical texts.

Students who are undecided whether they would pursue a career in technical translation provided the following justifications: they had not yet contemplated their future career paths (7 students); they felt unprepared to make a decision due to their limited experience with translating medical or technical texts (6 students); they expressed uncertainty about their ability to meet the demands of such a profession (4 students).

The second question addressed the difficulty of translating medical and technical texts in comparison to general translation (*Do you find the translation of technical and medical texts more difficult than general translation? Explain.*) The majority of students (18 students) finds medical and technical translation more challenging than general translation, mentioning three primary issues: difficulty in understanding specific sentences, terms, processes, or procedures described in the source text; inability to find equivalent terms in the target language; and uncertainty regarding the acceptability of their translations due to their limited knowledge and experience in the subject area.

The third question addressed the difficulty of translating medical and technical texts in comparison to each other (*Which do you find more difficult to translate: medical or technical texts? Explain.*). More students find technical translation (14 students) more challenging than medical translation (9 students). Those who find translating technical texts more difficult gave the following reasons: they contain highly specialized jargon and terminology related to engineering and IT, which may not have direct equivalents in other languages; technology evolves more rapidly, and new concepts, terms, and technologies are constantly being introduced; small errors can lead to significant problems, such as in user manuals

for complex machinery or software documentation; abbreviations and acronyms specific to certain technologies or industries may be confusing. Those who find translating medical texts more difficult, mentioned the following reasons: errors in medical translation can have severe consequences, such as misdiagnosis, inadequate treatment, even potential harm to patients; the complex medical terminology, including words of Latin and Greek origin, makes understanding more difficult; medical practices, treatment protocols, and healthcare systems can vary significantly between countries, requiring translators to have in-depth knowledge of these differences; medical texts often involve interdisciplinary knowledge, combining biology, chemistry, pharmacology, and clinical practice.

The fourth question inquired about the resources used when they translate specialized texts (*What sources and tools do you use when translating specialized texts?*). All students mentioned using machine translation (MT), online glossaries and dictionaries; eleven mentioned textbooks/ medical and engineering course books and specialized websites explaining and defining terms and describing relevant procedures. Three of them also asked specialists in the domain from their families or friends to help them.

The fifth question targeted the strategies or solutions employed to overcome difficulties in the translation of medical and technical texts (*What strategies or solutions did you use when you encountered difficulties in translating medical and technical texts?*). Students reported using several strategies, such as consulting specialized dictionaries or websites to find definitions of unfamiliar terms (all students); seeking to understand processes or procedures by referring to specialized sites (15 students) or asking friends or acquaintances with expertise in the domain (3 students); and relying on proofreading by colleagues, subject area specialists (3 students), or the teacher during classes (all students).

Question six referred to the usefulness of MT (such as DeepL, Google Translate) and CAT tools (such as Trados or memoQ) in translating medical and technical texts (*Do you find MT and CAT tools helpful in translating technical and medical texts? Explain.*). Students indicated that MT was useful in English-Hungarian and Hungarian-English translations, but post-editing was necessary in both directions. The respondents heavily relied on MT, translating the text with its help, and correcting mistranslations and errors in the generated target texts. CAT tools were deemed less helpful because the students had not previously used them to translate similar documents.

In the seventh question, translator trainees were asked to list five skills or characteristics they found important for a medical or technical translator (*List five*

skills that you consider important for a medical or technical translator!)). Some students listed fewer than five skills, others more, but the following were the most frequently mentioned: good command of the source and the languages (20 students); familiarity with the specialized domain (13 students); familiarity with the domain's terminology (7 students); problem solving skills (5 students); good writing skills (4 students).

TRANSLATOR TRAINEES' PERFORMANCE IN TRANSLATING MEDICAL AND TECHNICAL TEXTS

In this section, we provide two examples selected from an analysis of our students' translations of medical and technical texts from English into Hungarian, concentrating on the problems and challenges they faced and the strategies and solutions they employed to address these issues. During six course meetings they had to translate three medical and three technical texts from English into Hungarian. The course also includes translation of Hungarian texts into English and English-Romanian, Romanian-English translations, but in this article we focus only on translations from English into the students' native language. The examples consist of two paragraphs from longer texts of medium difficulty level, one from a medical translation and one from a technical translation, with explanations based on the corrected translations and the discussions with the students. The two tables with the examples present the source texts and a sample of our students' acceptable translations.

Table 1. English medical text translated into Hungarian

English source text	Hungarian translation
"The patient had been relatively well until approximately 2 months before admission, when shortness of breath developed. Home oxygen therapy was introduced at 0.5 liters per minute of oxygen through a nasal cannula at rest or during sleep and 1 liter per minute of oxygen on effort, with some improvement. Approximately 1 month before admission, anasarca developed. Additional diuretics were administered, but little improvement was observed. Finally, she agreed to take prednisone 18 days before admission. Two days before admission, her appetite decreased and coldness of the limbs developed. On the day of admission, she had 2 brief episodes of weakness	A páciens a felvételét megelőző körülbelül két hónapig viszonylag jól volt, amíg légszomj nem jelentkezett. Az otthoni oxigénterápiát 0,5 liter/perc oxigénnel vezették be orrkanülön keresztül, nyugalomban vagy alvás közben, és 1 liter/perc oxigénnel erőfeszítéskor, ami némi javulást eredményezett. A felvétel előtt körülbelül 1 hónappal bőr alatti vízenyő alakult ki. További vízhajtókat adtak, de kevés javulást észleltek. Végül 18 nappal a felvétel előtt beleegyezett a prednizon szedésébe. A felvétel előtt két nappal a beteg étvágya csökkent, és a végtagok kihűlése alakult ki. A beutalás napján két rövid ideig tartó gyengeségrohamja volt, és kórházunk sürgősségi osztályára szállították. A

English source text	Hungarian translation
and was transferred to the emergency department of our hospital. She reportedly had allergies to pyrazolone derivatives, beraprost sodium, bosentan hydrate, and sildenafil citrate. Her medical history was otherwise unremarkable. She did not drink alcohol, smoke, or use illicit drugs” (Blănaru & Romanic, 2018, p. 49).	beszámolók szerint allergiás volt a pirazon-származékokra, a beraproszt-nátriumra, a bozentán-hidrátra és a szildenafil-citrátra. A kórtörténete különben nem volt jelentős. Nem ivott alkoholt, nem dohányzott és nem fogyasztott tiltott drogokat.

In the process of correcting and evaluating the medical translations (a total of 72), followed by discussions with the students, we could identify three main categories where some of them had difficulties in translating the text. The first category refers to issues related to understanding and translating medical terminology (e.g. procedures, equipment, treatments, drug names). For example, when translating the expression *oxygen therapy*, some of them could not decide how to translate the word *therapy* – ‘terápia’ (therapy) or ‘kezelés’ (treatment, cure). In this case ‘terápia’ is the appropriate choice, because this is used in Hungarian medical communication. ‘Kezelés’ (treatment, cure) is a synonym of ‘terápia’ (therapy), but the expression ‘oxigén kezelés’ (oxygen treatment) is a term used in the field of cosmetics in Hungarian. The term *nasal cannula* also caused difficulties for some students. They had to search and understand the meaning of *cannula* (“a small tube for insertion into a body cavity or into a duct or vessel”²) and find the most appropriate translation. They had to choose from the synonyms ‘kanül’, ‘szonda’ and ‘cső’. In this context ‘(orr)kanül’ proved to be the appropriate choice. Understanding and translating *anasarca* (“generalized edema with accumulation of serum in the connective tissue”³) was also challenging, a few students failed to translate it, and simply copied the word from the source text. The appropriate translation of this expression is “bőr alatti vizenyő”⁴. Most students translated the pharmacologic substances such as *pyrazolone derivatives*, *beraprost sodium*, *bosentan hydrate*, and *sildenafil citrate* with the help of MT, without knowing what they are or what they mean.

The second category of difficulties could be observed in the translation of symptom descriptions – for example the expressions *shortness of breath* and *coldness of the limbs* in this paragraph. The equivalent of *shortness of breath* in Hungarian is ‘légszomj’, but some students translated the expression literally, as ‘légzés

² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cannula>

³ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/anasarca>

⁴ <https://dictzone.com/orvosi-magyar-szotar/anasarca>

rövisége/rövidülése’, which is also correct, but less frequently used in a medical context. The other expression related to symptom descriptions - *coldness of the limbs* - was translated by some students using narrowing of meaning, such as a ‘*kezek/lábak kihűlése*’ (coldness of the hands/feet). But the equivalent of *limbs* is ‘*végtagok*’, so the appropriate translation of the expression is ‘*végtagok kihűlése*’.

The third category consisted of some difficulties in translating the patient’s medical and behavioral history – in this paragraph the expressions *medical history* and *illicit drugs*. The equivalent of *medical history* was inadequately translated literally as ‘*orvosi történelem*’ by two students or ‘*orvosi történet*’ (medical story) by one of the students. The acceptable equivalent in this context is ‘*kórtörténet*’. *Illicit drugs* was mistranslated by one student as ‘*törvénytelen orvosságok*’ (illegal medicines) and by another as ‘*licitált drogok*’ (auctioned drugs), while the acceptable translations can be ‘*illegális/tiltott drogok/kábítószer*ek’.

Overall, the students rated this text as of medium difficulty, and some of them (six students) managed to translate it without errors.

Table 2. English technical text translated into Hungarian

English source text	Hungarian translation
<p>“All of the active circuit devices (e.g., diodes and transistors) from which electronic circuits are built are fabricated from so-called semiconductor materials. A semi-conductor material in pure form is neither a good conductor nor a good insulator. The ability of a material to conduct electric current is characterized by a property called conductivity. A metal such as copper, which is a good conductor, has a relatively high conductivity such that current flows in response to relatively low applied voltage. An insulator such as mica has a relatively low conductivity such that essentially zero current flows in response to an applied voltage. A semiconductor material has conductivity somewhere between that of a good conductor and that of a good insulator. Therefore, this material (also called semiconductor material) and devices made from it are semiconductor devices (also called solid-state devices)” (Blănaru & Romanic, 2018, p. 54)</p>	<p>Az összes aktív áramköri elem (például dióda és tranzisztor), amelyből az elektronikus áramkörök épülnek, úgynevezett félvezető anyagokból készül. A félvezető anyag tiszta formában nem jó vezető, és nem is jó szigetelő. Az anyagnak az elektromos áramot vezető képességét a vezetőképességnek nevezett tulajdonság jellemzi. Egy olyan fém, mint a réz, amely jó vezetőképességű, viszonylag magas vezetőképességgel rendelkezik, így viszonylag alacsony alkalmazott feszültség esetén is vezeti az áramot. Egy olyan szigetelő anyag, mint a csillám, viszonylag alacsony vezetőképességgel rendelkezik, tehát alapvetően nulla áram folyik az alkalmazott feszültség hatására. A félvezető anyag vezetőképessége valahol a jó vezető és jó szigetelő között van. Ezért ez az anyag (más néven félvezető anyag) és az abból készült eszközök félvezető eszközök (más néven szilárdtest eszközök).</p>

Table 2 shows an example of technical translation. In the process of correcting and evaluating the technical translations (a total of 72), followed by discussions with

the students, we could identify two main categories where some of them had difficulties in translating the text. The first category refers to technical terminology. The term *semiconductor materials* was adequately translated by most students as ‘félvezető anyagok’; only one student used ‘félig vezető anyagok’ (semi-conducting materials), which is not acceptable. A few students mistranslated the expression *active circuit devices* (“any type of circuit component with the ability to electrically control electric charge flow”⁵) as ‘aktív köreszközök’ (active circular devices) or ‘aktív körkűtyük’ (active circular gadgets). Translating *solid-state devices* (“electronic device in which electricity flows through solid semiconductor crystals - silicon, gallium arsenide, germanium - rather than through vacuum tubes”⁶) was also challenging, this term requires careful translation to ensure that the correct meaning is conveyed, as it can refer to a specific type of semiconductor device. The acceptable translation is ‘szilárdtest eszközök’, but three students translated it literally as ‘szilárd állapotú eszközök’ and five students omitted translating this term.

The other category where our students encountered difficulties in translating technical texts consisted of issues related to sentence structure. They heavily relied on MT, and in some cases they failed to post-edit the word-order of certain sentences. They rated this text as one of easy to medium difficulty, and eight students managed to translate it without errors.

CONCLUSIONS

Medical and technical translation has proven to be a challenging task for translator trainees, whose primary interests lie in humanistic studies, without prior experience or studies in health care or engineering. Most students do not intend to pursue careers as medical or technical translators and they heavily depend on machine translation and online resources to compensate their lack of subject-specific knowledge. However, due to market demands and personal or financial motivations, some students are inclined to consider a career in medical or technical translation.

Our BA training program does not have the purpose, capacity or time to train medical or technical translators. Nevertheless, specialized languages and specialized translation are incorporated into our curriculum at an introductory level. Therefore, we try to introduce the fundamental characteristics of medical and technical writing and translation, raise our students’ awareness of the necessary

⁵ <https://www.allaboutcircuits.com/textbook/semiconductors/chpt-1/active-versus-passive-devices/>

⁶ <https://www.britannica.com/technology/solid-state-device>

skills and knowledge, and include activities which may contribute to the development of strategies and techniques that students can use when working with specialized texts. The answers to the questionnaire and the analysis of our students' translations provided a deeper insight into our students' strengths, weaknesses, and needs, which is useful for curriculum development.

Based on our results, the lack of medical or technical knowledge definitely influences the performance of translators, and hence, for those aspiring to become medical or technical translators, further specialized training in the subject domains is recommended. A potential future step in this research could be a study comparing medical and technical translations performed by translator trainees with medical or engineering students' work with high levels of proficiency in English.

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Translating 9/11 Essays: A Theoretical Perspective

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Abstract: 9/11 is a singular event in American history, with specific language and phrases that seemingly cannot be translated. The topic of terror attacks is written about in media, fiction, and nonfiction. Due to its global significance, news about 9/11 was translated into many different languages, but some aspects of the tragedy fall under the “untranslatable” category. Many shorthand phrases became popular in the United States to encompass the unspeakable. “Ground Zero” references the area where the towers collapsed, “the Pile” was often used to discuss the rubble and debris that remained. Those who either fell or leaped out of the Twin Towers were called “the Jumpers”, etc. These terms are difficult to input into a different language because they are stripped of their cultural significance or simply do not have a foreign-language equivalent. Furthermore, 9/11 is viewed as an event that supersedes words in English as well. Many writers expressed a reluctance to talk about 9/11 due to the magnitude of the event and the apparent lack of words to capture it. Moreover, part of the problem of understanding (and translating) 9/11 is that two cultures and religions also clash. The American, mostly Christian perspective does not comprehend the motivations of the Muslim terrorists. So, when translating texts about 9/11, multiple problems arise. The aim of this paper is to explore translation strategies and trauma studies as a tool for understanding and translation for 9/11 essays.

Keywords: 9/11, post-9/11 literature, literary essay, translation studies, 9/11 literature

INTRODUCTION

Today, most Americans know what the phrase 9/11 refers to. The two numbers, separated by a slash, hold deep meaning to the public, even though it is written just like any other date in the American style. Yet most people know exactly that 9/11 refers to the 11th of September 2001, when planes hijacked by terrorists crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center, costing the lives of about three thousand innocents. Whereas dates written in this style are expressed orally as the 12th of September or September 12, “orally, 9/11 is spoken with a ‘literal’

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recitation of the figures: nine eleven and not with a 'transformed' reading" (Martín and Guerra, 2010, p. 59). 9/11 became lexicalized, a word in its own right in order to encompass the entirety of the tragic events that took place on that sunny Tuesday morning in New York City.

Although it is rather common to name places, situations, or events with a shortened form or an abbreviation, it may also act as a simplifying term that replaces a much larger issue. In an interview conducted by Giovanna Borradori with Jacques Derrida, Derrida notes that such simplifications and naming practices often lead to a loss of meaning. In the case of 9/11, the incessant repetition of the date might lead to a lack of understanding.

"Something" took place, we have the feeling of not having seen it coming, and certain consequences undeniably follow upon the "thing." But this very thing, the place and meaning of this "event," remains ineffable, like an intuition without concept, like a unicity with no generality on the horizon or with no horizon at all, out of range for a language that admits its powerlessness and so is reduced to pronouncing mechanically a date, repeating it endlessly, as a kind of ritual incantation, a conjuring poem, a journalistic litany or a rhetorical refrain that admits to not knowing what it's talking about. We do not in fact know what we are saying or naming in this way: September 11, le 11 septembre, September 11. The brevity of the appellation (September 11, 9/11) stems not only from an economic or rhetorical necessity. The telegram of this metonymy – a name, a number – points out the unqualifiable by recognizing that we do not recognize or even cognize, that we do not yet know how to qualify, that we do not know what we are talking about. (Borradori, 2003, p. 86)

Derrida views the term 9/11 as a hypernym under which multiple more specific terms fall, but his aversion to the naming practice also stems from the idea that many thoughts and emotions cannot be expressed about 9/11. Multiple writers and critics echo his claim that "we do not recognize or even cognize" (Borradori, 2003, p. 86) some elements of 9/11. Richard Gray points out that in the wake of the terror attacks, "[n]othing to say" became a refrain, a recurrent theme with writers, as they struggled to cope with something that seemed to be, quite literally, beyond words" (Gray, 2011, p. 15). "Nothing to say" was one of the key fears of writers after the events of 9/11. The tragedy felt too big for words, as well as politically and religiously convoluted. During the first few days after 9/11, many people, be they writers or laymen, could not make sense of the images and footage that were shown everywhere, from newspapers to 24-hour news coverage, and even the Internet. This state of confusion, panic, and disorientation is understandable due to the singularity of 9/11. As Noam Chomsky points out, the "horrifying atrocities of September 11 are something quite new in world affairs, not in their scale and

character, but in the target” (2011, p. 43). He compares 9/11 to other events of significance in American history, such as Pearl Harbor, but he quickly adds that these comparisons are not justified because “this is the first time since the War of 1812 that the national territory has been under attack, or even threatened” (Chomsky, 2011, p. 43)². In fact, until 2001, Americans never experienced war or danger of this magnitude on their own soil, whereas most other countries in the world were affected by wars in recent memory.

Post-9/11 literature³ reflects this state of shock and unwillingness to talk substantively about the events of September 11. Many novels about 9/11 use the terror attack as a background matter to propel a fictional character’s story. For example, one of the most famous novels about 9/11, *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer, is a coming-of-age story about a young boy whose father incidentally died on 9/11. Richard Gray uses the term “process of familiarization” (2011, p. 52) to explain that many authors try their best to fit 9/11 into the world as they know it by comparing it to other tragedies or giving their protagonists coping strategies that sound familiar and cliché. “Crisis is recuperated in many cases, assimilated into the conventional structures and series of tropes tending to reassure the reader that nothing has determinately altered” (Gray, 2011, p. 51). For example, Foer’s 9-year-old protagonist, Oskar is a mouthpiece for the writer in *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, often possessing knowledge about the world that would not be possible for a child of his age. However, he refers to 9/11 as “the worst day” (Foer, 2018, p. 68), which distances him from the reality of the terror attacks. This, in turn, feels as though Oskar’s father could have died in any incident; 9/11 could be substituted with any other sudden death that a young boy could contend with.

Although fiction, poetry, and theater about 9/11 are thoroughly analyzed, there is a gap in the research regarding literary nonfiction about 9/11, which means that many of these essays have never been translated either. In my doctoral thesis, *“The Howling Space”: 9/11 in the Contemporary American Essay*, I explore the essays written about 9/11 by American authors. These texts were left out of the canon, so

² Chomsky also points out that Pearl Harbor was attacked at a time when Hawaii was considered a separate territory (or a colony) under US control, not quite part of the national territory of the United States (see Chomsky, 2011, p. 43).

³ Although the term “post-9/11 literature” is still used to discuss literature written about 9/11, the term is inaccurate. “Post-9/11 literature” was popularized due to the belief that 9/11 would forever change the American literary landscape and the events of 9/11 would be the exact point that would start a paradigm shift from the postmodern to the next literary movement. Even though 9/11 had a strong effect on American culture, it did not bring about a giant paradigm shift in literature, so, in essence, “post-9/11 literature” only refers to literature about 9/11.

most of them were never translated into many other languages. In my view, essays about 9/11 pose an interesting challenge for translators due to their threefold connection to the event. The essays reflect the current geopolitical structure of the world; they are also embedded into the culture of the writer, and they capture his opinions and feelings more directly than fiction does. So, these texts are culturally and even religiously intertwined with the United States, from very specific locations to cultural customs and very specific worldviews, depending on the writer whose thoughts are transmitted into a different language. The more common translation problems (e.g., names such as the Pile, the Jumpers, etc., culturally and geographically significant locations, etc.) are met with the idea of singularity stemming from American exceptionalism, which is often echoed by the writers themselves. Their view of the events of 9/11 is that nothing is comparable, and as such, there are no words that describe it or capture it thoroughly. This leads to uncertain language and stylistic choices that may not translate properly into other languages, especially if the target cultures have experienced war and terror. Questions of destabilization and cultural loss arise when it comes to such literary translation. Is the translation able to express the alterity felt by Americans? The aim of this paper is to examine the theoretical translation strategies that should be adapted when translating literary nonfiction, namely essays about 9/11.

LITERATURE ABOUT 9/11: UNDERSTANDING AND TRANSLATION

9/11 is a singular event in American history that brings to the forefront many beliefs and values of the American people, while also deepening some of the preconceived notions of the Center and the Other. In this case, the Center is the United States, a global military, economic, and cultural superpower, and the Other is the nonspecific Arab terrorist whose identity is an amalgam of stereotypes of radical behavior, religious zealots, and senseless violence.

“In the post-9/11 world, the administration of George W. Bush, through media presentations of his speeches, has anthropomorphized courage and bravery. At the same time, his rhetoric also puts a face on terror (and it is Arab) by employing words and expressions such as ‘them,’ ‘they,’ ‘evil,’ ‘those people,’ ‘demons,’ and ‘wanted: dead or alive’ to characterize people of Arab/Middle Eastern descent.” (Merskin, 2005, p. 121)

Such language, consistently used by the President of the United States, played a large part in the process of othering not only those who live outside of the USA but also Arab Americans. Furthermore, American media and popular culture depict

this Other consistently as this stereotype. “Popular culture and mass media in the United States have generated and sustained stereotypes of a monolithic evil Arab” (Merskin, 2005, p. 121). Literature about 9/11 written by American writers often tries to tackle this dichotomy of Center and Other, to varying degrees of success. In many cases, the writer’s own cultural and geopolitical biases, victim status, and lack of understanding of the Other prevent them from surpassing the Arab aggressor stereotype so heavily embedded into American culture. Such an example can be seen in John Updike’s *Terrorist*. Although Updike’s aim is to explore the psyche of the terrorist, he fails to remove his biases and Christian religious beliefs to further understand the character he creates. Updike’s fictional terrorist, Ahmad, begins the novel with the following statement. “These devils seek to take away my God. All day long, at Central High School, girls sway and sneer and expose their soft bodies and alluring hair” (Updike, 2007, p. 1). As Anna Hartnell points out, Updike writes from an imperialistic point of view, so his “novel fails to conceive of a meaningful relationship between faith and politics, and thus Ahmad’s Islam is ultimately repudiated as a religious position irremediably contaminated by politics” (2011, p. 495).

When it comes to translating fiction about 9/11, it is inevitable to ponder the strategies of domestication and foreignization, introduced by Lawrence Venuti. Broadly, domestication refers to the translation of a source text to culturally and linguistically conform to the target language and culture. Foreignization does the opposite by changing the target language in order to keep it closer to the source language. A foreignized text “reflects the [source language] norms and reminds the target culture readers that they are dealing with a translation, thus in some ways bringing them closer to the experience of the foreign text” (Munday, 2009, p. 189). Venuti also points out that foreignized texts showcase the presence of the translator more than domesticated texts do because they rely more on the translator’s judgment of each culture. “The notion of foreignization can alter the ways translations are read as well as produced because it assumes a concept of human subjectivity that is very different from the humanist assumptions underlying domestication” (Venuti, 1995, p. 24). Kristy Hemsworth observes this dichotomy of translation strategies in relation to 9/11 literature and the themes of Self and Other. She notes that the alterity between “us” (Americans) and “them” (terrorists, enemies, etc.) “divides source and target domains, establishing an irreconcilable difference that the polarized strategies of domestication and foreignization consolidate and exacerbate” (Hemsworth, 2015a, p. 7). Hemsworth claims that this approach “risks perpetuating a reductive view of 9/11 novels as nothing more than

fictionalized accounts of a conflict between the fundamentally disparate binary of the American Self and Terrorist Other” (2015a, p. 7).

Hemsworth discusses translation strategies of 9/11 novels, but seeing as 9/11 is a real-life event, translation became problematic in mass media, legal documents, etc. Emily Apter claims that the Us vs Them mentality led to language panic after 9/11, noting that there is “a heightened awareness that something as nano-scaled as a translation error can precipitate catastrophic intelligence failures, and in the worst case scenario, another 9/11” (2009, p. 195). Furthermore, many translators were questioned, ousted, and accused of wrong translations after 9/11 due to the mistrust of the Other, even if that person simply had knowledge of Arabic⁴. Thus, “nothing to say” or the fear of saying something incorrect permeates the translators’ work as well. Keeping these anxieties in mind, what strategy does the translator of a work of fiction choose? If a text is translated with domestication practices, does it lose the singularity felt and portrayed so heavily by American writers? Hemsworth claims that

translations of 9/11 literature require a divisive, potentially subversive and fundamentally ‘American’ event to be culturally and linguistically uprooted and re-sited in an exterior target language. 9/11 is consistently expressed – whether in media, public, or political discourses –, commemorated and historicized in reference to the fiercely defended values and beliefs of the American nation. (2015b, p. 85)

Writing about 9/11, especially from the centralized American point of view, is predominantly an exploration of trauma, be it collective or individual. In Hemsworth’s view, the dichotomy of domestication and foreignization is not enough to explore the themes discussed in 9/11 literature. Postcolonial readings and translations of texts help move the rather Anglocentric translation practices toward the direction of target languages. However, Hemsworth notes that “literature is seen, rather riskily, as representative of the literary or linguistic heritage from which it emerges, offering an insight into the ethics of difference that divide the cultural domains implicated in the translation process” (2015a, p. 14). Furthermore, Hemsworth views the strategies of domestication and foreignization as an overly polarized approach. She points out that there is “postcolonialized divide between domestication and foreignization” which in turn may risk “perpetuating the simplified perspective of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 as a conflict between the very binaries of Self and Other that 9/11 novels seek to destabilize” (2015b, p. 86).

⁴ For examples of biases against translators in the wake of 9/11, see Emily Apter’s article, “Translation – 9/11: Terrorism, Immigration, Language Politics.”

Hemsworth introduces the term “empathic unsettlement”, coined by Dominick LaCapra to refer to the understanding of someone else’s trauma. LaCapra claims that

“[b]eing responsive to the traumatic experience of others, notably of victims, implies not the appropriation of their experience but what I would call empathic unsettlement, which should have stylistic effect or, more broadly, effects in writing which cannot be reduced to formulas or rules of method.” (2014, p. 41)

Hemsworth argues that domesticating and foreignizing strategies can be implemented due to the translator’s agency and can differentiate between Self and Other, but these strategies reduce the Self and Other dichotomy “into an individually implemented translator trait, rather than a product of the cultural or literary pressures on translation practice” (Hemsworth, 2015a, p. 19). So, the translator’s own biases regarding their knowledge of the source culture, their political affiliation, etc., can heavily affect the literary work in the target language. Hemsworth borrows the term empathic unsettlement from trauma studies in order to bridge the gap between the dichotomy of Self and Other, foreign and domestic. In essence, the term *empathic unsettlement* describes a way in which someone else can relate to an individual’s trauma without appropriating it. LaCapra uses the term to describe the work of historians, whom he refers to as secondary witnesses. In his view, empathy is “a virtual but not a vicarious experience in that the historian puts him- or herself in the other’s position without taking the other’s place or becoming a substitute or surrogate for the other who is authorized to speak in the other’s voice” (LaCapra, 2004, p. 65).

In the case of 9/11 literature, the translator’s position is similar to the historian’s because their role is to transmit someone’s traumatic experiences to a different group of people, whether through curation and memorialization or through translation. Hemsworth views empathy, as defined by LaCapra, as a tool to view domestication and foreignization techniques comparatively, instead of as two separate entities. Hemsworth applies this empathy-based approach to fiction about 9/11, but in my view, it especially suits nonfiction texts due to the lack of fictionalization. Many essays about 9/11 are written by someone who experienced trauma firsthand. These texts are not only survivor stories but also eyewitness accounts and, if publicly shared, they can become political, they can form the public narrative, etc.

One of the fundamental trauma theorists, Kalí Tal, expresses similar concerns about how a survivor story is retold. “What happens when a survivor’s story is retold (and revised) by a writer who is not a survivor? How are survivor’s stories

adapted to fit and then contained within the dominant structure of social, cultural and political discourse?" (Tal, 1996, p. 3). Tal refers to survivor stories as literatures of trauma, "a marginal literature similar to that produced by feminist, African-American, and queer writers – in fact, it often overlaps with these literatures" (1996, p. 17). I find that empathic unsettlement and trauma studies combine naturally with 9/11 essays because 9/11 essays are part of the literature of trauma, and as such, they are suited for emphatic reading.

9/11 ESSAYS: TRAUMA, MEMORY, AND TRANSLATION

Translation and memorialization are inherently similar concepts because both practices try to transfer from a source (whether it is a survivor's testimony or imagery, sounds, etc.) into a target text. Memorialization, such as historiography or archiving, is always inherently selective and subjective, as scholars such as Hayden White discussed. Even photography, viewed by many as a perfect copy of what happened, is understood and contextualized in culture, thus gaining additional meaning. Hemsworth focuses on fiction written about 9/11, but fiction written about 9/11 is constantly tied to real-world spaces.

Within this space, empathic unsettlement offers a rendering of the various lenses and fictional identities through which the traumatic experience of 9/11 is focalized: across boundaries between fictional identities within the world of the text; for the author straddling both real-world and fictionalized versions of the event; and across the dissipating proximity from the event, to author, to translation. (Hemsworth, 2015b, pp. 86–87)

Literary essays are not fictional texts, but they are still works of literature, not meant to be read as reports or a collection of facts. Even though the essay is a nonfictional genre, meaning that there is no perceived narrative voice, and the reader assumes that the writer is truthful about their experiences, creative liberties are still taken in favor of style and aesthetics. Although the translator does not have to examine the relationship between a fictional character's identity and the writer's identity, they must contend with the fact that 9/11 essays (as nonfictional texts) are also survivor accounts in many cases. As Hemsworth explains, translation itself can be viewed as a form of empathic unsettlement, meaning that a comparative reading of the source text and a translated version can point out linguistic and stylistic differences that alter meaning in the target language. Hemsworth exemplifies this with the use of personal pronouns in the original English version of Don DeLillo's *Falling Man* and the French translation by Marianne Véron. The sentence "That was

him coming down, the North Tower” (DeLillo, 2007, p. 5) equates the North Tower with the confused and shocked Keith, the protagonist, who is also escaping the tower. This both implies a personification of the tower and may refer to “the protagonist’s disorientating sense of temporal dislocation, whereby his physical escape from the towers does not secure and equivalent, psychological break from their traumatic effects” (Hemsworth, 2015b, p. 92). Hemsworth also observes that in French, the word “tower” is a feminine noun, *la tour*, thus the translated sentence more overtly expresses the personification of the tower.

The over subject here is the personified tower – lui: la tour nord – the adjacent pronoun and noun-phrase linked by a colon that acts as a cohesive, and explanatory, link between two linguistic units. This arguably reflects the general tendency of the French text to favor a more coherent sense of narrative linearity over the grammatical disjuncture of DeLillo’s text. (Hemsworth, 2015b, p. 92)

The translation of essays about 9/11 requires similar attitudes of empathic readings because their nonfictional nature elevates them to the status of testimony. In my view, the question of accuracy in such translation is more about the cultural and ideological than the linguistic. For example, postcolonial readings of reactive texts such as John Updike and Jonathan Franzen’s essays in the “Tuesday, and After” collection published in *The New Yorker* are useful in decentralizing American exceptionalism. However, when translated, these texts should keep their centralized point of view to some degree. For example, John Updike’s “Tuesday, and After” essay⁵ is a perfect representation of the early reactions of the American people. He focuses on American freedoms and values, which he understands from a centralized point of view.

American freedom of motion, one of our prides, has taken a hit. Can we afford the openness that lets future kamikaze pilots, say, enroll in Florida flying schools? A Florida neighbor of one of the suspects remembers him saying he didn’t like the United States: “He said it was too lax. He said, ‘I can go anywhere I want to, and they can’t stop me.’” It is a weird complaint, a begging perhaps to be stopped. (Updike, 2001, September 24, p. 28)

In this example, Updike expresses judgments and guesses about the terrorists’ intentions based on his understanding of the world as a citizen of the United States,

⁵ “Tuesday, and After” is a collection of untitled essays published in *The New Yorker* on the 24th of September, 2001. Some of the contributing writers include John Updike, Jonathan Franzen, and Susan Sontag. The essays were published soon after the attacks so many of them are reactive, capturing the fear and shock of the American people in a very specific time period.

the global superpower. However, on September 11, 2001, the superpower became a victim, which is almost an oxymoronic statement. However, the concept of *empathic unsettlement* calls for the understanding of the victim without appropriating their experience. This approach emphasizes maintaining a clear distinction between the Self (or the source) and the Other (or the target), allowing for empathy without erasing the victim's unique experiences. In theory, most target language translators cannot relate to the American exceptionalism depicted by multiple 9/11 essayists. American exceptionalism is defined as “the idea that the United States is not just the richest and most powerful of the world’s more than two hundred states but is also politically and morally exceptional” (Hodgson, 2009, p. 10).

American exceptionalism is inherently irrational because those who view America through this lens “minimize the contributions of other nations and cultures to the rule of law and to the evolution of political democracy” (Hodgson, 2009, p. 10). This exceptionalist view of the United States is particularly present, even in the writings of postmodernist writers whose other works would normally criticize such perspectives. This phenomenon is explained by the traumatic experiences of these writers, many of which were present in New York when the Twin Towers were hit. The terrorist attacks of September 11 took the lives of innocent civilians in a cinematic, visually captivating manner⁶ that was broadcast live on television, but also flooded the senses of those present in New York. The billowing smoke was visible from any vantage point in the city; the air was filled with the smells of destruction, and smoke, dust, and ash were carried across the neighborhoods. For this reason, the American writers’ feelings of victimhood cannot be understated.

CONCLUSIONS

Translating 9/11 essays is challenging on a theoretical level due to the deeply embedded cultural, linguistic, and emotional nuances associated with the terrorist attacks. I view the concept of *empathic unsettlement*, introduced by Dominick LaCapra and borrowed by Hemsworth to understand polarized translation strategies, as a crucial tool to navigate these complexities. When translating essays about 9/11, translators are in a difficult position. Americans view 9/11 as a singular event that perpetuates ideas of American exceptionalism. The USA defines itself as both a victim and a world leader, so ideas of Self and Other, Us vs Them, trauma, and power all clash within nonfiction texts about 9/11. Translation of such texts is

⁶ Many writers expressed their shock by comparing the fall of the Twin Towers to movie scenes. Artists such as Damien Hirst called the attacks “visually stunning”.

challenging due to the inherent tension between domestication and foreignization strategies. While domestication risks diluting the event's specific cultural resonance, foreignization could alienate readers and force a perspective that is not fully understood by the target language and its culture. I view the translator's role as one similar to that of the historian or the curator, carefully mediating between the original trauma and the target audience's potential understanding of it.

The translator's role is further complicated by the fact that 9/11 essays are not fictional texts; they are testimonies and survivor stories that can contribute to the collective understanding of 9/11. As such, translators must approach these texts with a deep sense of responsibility in order not to dilute and change the victim's story for the sake of cultural transfer. By adopting an approach grounded in empathic unsettlement, translators can help bridge the cultural and linguistic gaps, cognizant of the fact that the 9/11 essay is part of the literatures of trauma, and thus, a testimony.

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Translation Error Rate Applied to Units of Translation

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Abstract: Translation metrics are useful tools for evaluating translation adequacy and are usually applied to large segments to determine the quality of the translation output. However, they can also be applied to smaller segments, which can be regarded as units of translation as well. I have decided to test a metric called the translation error rate (abbreviated as TER) and apply it to smaller units of translation such as phrases/locutions, and a few instances of collocations and idioms. I will also adapt the TER to better suit such smaller segments, by using certain features meant to improve the metric results, such as the notion of error weight. These smaller segments have been chosen from a legal context (a legal case) and focus on errors of style (unusual, awkward language use) and instances of figurative language. The TER is calculated by considering the improvements brought to the units of translation. The findings show that the TER is generally high with smaller units, because usually only a third or half of the entire segments are wrongly translated, and as a result, changes are mandatory. These changes are directly proportional with the TER score.

Keywords: *TER (translation error rate), unit of translation, phrases, locutions, error weight*

INTRODUCTION

Translation metrics are used to increase objectivity in the evaluation of translation, and one such metric is called the TER, an abbreviation for *translation error rate*, used to determine the number of changes performed on an input in the course of translation. What happens however when we restrict the TER to smaller segments which revolve around style? In the following I will attempt to answer this question with the help of several examples regarding the style in a text. The advantage of applying such tools to such a small-scale study is the level of detail included in the study, with the aim of shedding light on the error rates and the units referring to such error rates. Yet, the disadvantage is that such a study can only focus on the smaller segments (style errors), lacking the panoramic perspective of other studies which may feature larger corpuses, and therefore the possibility of

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encompassing many other types of errors. Considering this disadvantage, I have decided to somehow adjust the metric, by considering other features in the calculation, such as the error weight.

THE MANY FACETS OF A CALCULATION: THE TRANSLATION ERROR RATE

I will begin with a description of the (H)TER, then move on to the description of units of translation subjected to analysis, before presenting my findings with such units of translation, as found in the excerpts I have chosen for this study.

The TER, or *translation error rate* is described as a metric which “calculates the number of edits required to change a machine translation output into one of the references” (machinetranslate.org), meaning that this metric takes into consideration the number of editing operations which are to be performed to obtain a better translated output, one that reflects the source-text information appropriately. The translation error rate is usually abbreviated as TER, yet it can also be found under different abbreviations, such as hTER or TERp (machinetranslate.org). There is also the HTER metric, defined as “a human-targeted TER”, “where the minimum TER of the translation is computed against this new reference” (Snover et al., 2006, p. 225 and Snover et al., 2005, p. 3), meaning that it takes into consideration only the minimum edits performed on the translation input.

According to Snover et al. (2005), the TER metric is “a purely automatic evaluation metric”, while the HTER is “a human-in-the-loop method” which is meant actually to measure “post-editing distance” (Snover et al., 2005, p.3). This distance means “the percentage of changes done by a linguist in a text after machine translation has been applied to it” (SimulTrans.com), so that the output manifests “the expected level of quality in terms of accuracy, fluency, syntax, and grammar” (SimulTrans.com). Also, the metric quantifies the edits needed to modify the input (the so-called *hypothesis*), therefore they comprise only the minimum number of edits “to the closest *reference*” (Snover et al., 2006, p.225). The changes which TER encompasses refer to the editing processes such as “insertions, deletions and substitutions of single words as well as shifts of word sequences” (Daems and Macken, 2021, pp. 56-57). What is also worth mentioning is that all edits “have equal cost”, that “punctuation tokens are treated as normal words” (Snover et al., 2006, p.225). These edits are treated equally because the metric does not assign a higher or lower value to a particular edit as opposed to another.

What is interesting regarding all these metrics is that they were all devised to facilitate the evaluation of translations, as opposed to the human evaluation of translations, considered as time-consuming, difficult or noisy; here, the term “noisy” refers to something which contains “meaningless data” as well as “corrupt data or data that cannot be understood and interpreted correctly by machines” (techtargt.com). However, when looking at the methods of applying such metrics, the resulting edited output is compared to human translations, in other words, translations performed by human beings serve as examples for judging the quality of the automatic output. For instance, the metric called TER quantifies the edits necessary to conform to a so-called ideal version of the translation, yet the term “ideal” should be handled with a pinch of salt, because there is no such thing as an ideal translation, only possible versions of a translation.

Snover et al. (2006) as well as the definition provided on the website machinetranslate.org mention terms referring to the output sentence (called *output* or *hypothesis*), and *references*, which points to various translated outputs, out of which the most adequate one must be selected.

Normally, the TER score is calculated in two phases in the domain of computational linguistics, namely that of language processing. I will present the phases briefly in the following pages, just for information. I do not intend to use such processes in my calculation, but instead I will adopt a simplistic calculation.

First, all the changes performed on the input, meaning “the number of insertions, deletions and substitutions is calculated using *dynamic programming*” (Snover et al., 2006, p.225), and a thing called “*greedy search*” “is used to find the set of shifts”, through a repetitive selection of the shift which “most reduces the number of insertions, deletions and substitutions, until no more beneficial shifts remain” (Snover et al., 2006, p.225). This greedy search is therefore meant to focus on the minimum number of edits performed on the input.

Obviously, if any errors are encountered, these trigger the necessity for changes or edits to be performed upon the hypothesis, which is therefore transformed into a reference. The higher the number of changes performed on the translation, the higher the TER score, and there is no differentiation done amongst the errors or changes. In other words, no error is considered more serious than another, just like no subsequent change is deemed more important than another change.

This was highlighted by Jake Daems and Lieve Macken (2021) who consider this to be one of the disadvantages of the TER score: its inability to distinguish between necessary and unnecessary changes, making such scores therefore “hard

to interpret” (Daems and Macken, 2021, p.57). Yet scholarly intervention manages to identify categories of changes, based on the identified errors.

An example is a study conducted by Daems and Macken (2021) where three categories were decided upon, namely *necessary changes* when the error correction was performed successfully, *underrevision* “for errors that had not been corrected” and *overrevision* “for changes that introduced an error” (Daems and Macken, 2021, p.58). The authors further explained how they focused only on changes performed due to the existence of errors, “as all other changes could be considered preferential” (Daems and Macken, 2021, p.58). They relied only on the necessary changes, and multiplied them by “their respective severity weights” (Daems and Macken, 2021, p.57).

Therefore, the focus was only on the changes which had been triggered by the errors, whereas other changes were not considered as worth the effort, given how they depended on each translator’s working style.

In the following I will provide an example of a translation error rate calculation, performed on a small segment. The below formula contained by Image 1 is used to calculate the TER score and an example is also provided for both reference and hypothesis, as featured in Snover et al.:

$$\text{TER} = \frac{\# \text{ of edits}}{\text{average } \# \text{ of reference words}}$$

Image 1. A TER Calculation Score

Source: Snover et al., 2006, p. 225 and Snover et al., 2005, p. 3

HYPOTHESIS: THIS WEEK THE SAUDIS denied information published in the new york times
REFERENCE: SAUDI ARABIA denied THIS WEEK information published in the AMERICAN new york times

Image 2. Hypothesis and Reference Example

Source: Snover et al., 2006, p.225 and Snover et al., 2005, p. 3

The calculation example is provided as an image in the original, I have decided to write it down for more clarity from a graphic point of view. In this example, the authors identified four errors, as a results four changes needed to be performed: two substitutions (*Saudi Arabia* instead of the *Saudis*, *this week* placed between the verb and the direct object), one insertion (the adjective *American*), one shift (*Saudi Arabia* placed at the beginning of the sentence).

The number of changes (4) is divided against the number of words in the reference (13), which gives us a very long number (0,30769) that needs

approximation. As a result, the score is 0,31, which rendered into percentage is 31% (Snover et al., 2005). This is the example calculation I will rely on when performing my own TER calculation on units of translation.

A thing which I do not agree with concerning the above example is the phrase “new york times” left uncorrected, while it should have been written in capital letters. At the same time, I prefer not to venture into issues of typography regarding the TER score.

THE WEIGHT FACTOR IN THE TER CALCULATION

In order to facilitate matters, the *weight* factor was introduced in the study by Daems and Macken. As the name of this concept suggests, when referring to errors, it has to do with how much an error weights, given a certain context, the translated output, where exactly the error occurs in the text. These weights are usually part of a scale, and they may range from 1 to 3 (as for Daems and Macken) or from 1 to 4, or even start from 0 (Daems et al., 2015, p. 36). In this latter case, the 0 value is attributed to such errors which actually do not represent errors but “can be interesting to annotate, such as explications” (Daems et al., 2015, p.36).

Daems and Macken used formulas called severity weights ranging from 1 to 3 to calculate the impact of changes on the translated output, where 1 implies the smallest weight and 3 the most significant weight attached to the change (Daems and Macken, 2021, p.57). With the help of TER combined with these severity weights one can identify instances of overediting and hence overcorrection (undesirable in the professional world). In my opinion, a severity weight of 0 could be linked to instances of preferential changes and overrevision². Since I focus only on necessary changes dictated by the presence of errors, I choose not to use the 0-severity weight.

THE PHRASE OR LOCUTION IN ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN

Because my study deals with phrases, I will attempt to explain what is meant by phrase (and by locution) in both English and Romanian, before presenting the topic of unit of translation and the results of my study.

Although the word is usually regarded as “the primary unit of lexical meaning” (Sinclair, 2004, p.25), there are also other units to be considered in translation, such as

² A process by which the revisor of a translation performs too many corrections, even if some are not necessary.

phrases (noun phrases, verb phrases, just to name a few), compounds, phraseological units, collocations, idioms and lexical bundles (Sinclair, 2004).

On the one hand, there are elements such as “phrases and clauses”, which “fit together in Chinese boxes with labelled bracketing” (Sinclair, 2004, p. 27), and can be defined more easily.

On the other hand, there are other “anarchic” elements, defined as “recognized patterns where the independence of the word is compromised in some way” (Sinclair, 2004, p. 27). Such elements are for example “idioms, fixed phrases, variable phrases, clichés, proverbs”, as well as technical and specialized terms (Sinclair, 2004, p. 27).

According to Sinclair phrases differ in terms of transparency, for example phrasal verbs or idioms. The individual words which compose a respective phrase may contribute “directly to the meaning of the expression” (Sinclair, 2004, p.28), such as the phrasal verb *to bear on* or the idiom *to beat someone up*, where the sense of both individual words and the phrase is clear enough (*to have an effect on*, respectively *to beat somebody badly*). There is also the reverse, where each words has its own meaning and they do not contribute to the meaning of the phrase, instead the overall meaning of the phrase differs from its individual parts, such as the phrasal verb in *the rain beats down*, which means *to rain very hard* (the rain does not beat anything) (Sinclair, 2004).

With an idiom, there is a difference between the global meaning of the idiom and the meanings of its parts; yet the meanings of idioms are also attributed meanings, in that a certain linguistic community has assigned a distinct meaning to a particular idiom (Gill, 2011). Given that the meaning of an idiom already represents “an established item of vocabulary with an established meaning attached” (Gill, 2011, p.16), there is even no need to predict or infer the global meaning of an idiom by considering its components.

If words may be part of larger units and sentences are also composed of smaller units, it is necessary to identify what the units between words and sentences are. These elements are called phrases, they represents “constituents of sentences” (Freeborn, 1995, p.22) which can be moved within sentences (Freeborn, 1995).

Concerning the Romanian language, scholars have contributed with definitions such as the following for elements larger than words: “Parts of a sentence can combine among themselves in various groups in terms of length and structure, which is why structuralists use the common denomination of syntagm or constituent”³ (Our translation) (Stati, 2003).

³ (both syntagm and constituent are in bold in the original) “Părțile unui enunț se combină între ele în grupuri diferite ca întindere și ca structură, pentru care structuraliștii folosesc denumirea comună de sintagmă sau constituit”.

The Romanian for “phrase” is the term “locuțiune”. There are studies (such as that of Cecilia Căpățână) based on the idea that there’s insufficient conceptual definition surrounding the term *locuțiune* in Romanian, which results in the improper use of this term (Căpățână, 2007).

However, other scholars and sources have managed to construct a definition. For Theodor Hristea, the phrase or locution in Romanian is a “group of words which is more or less fixed, which features a unitary meaning and behaves from a grammatical point of view as a single part of speech”⁴ (Our translation) (Grammar of the Romanian Language p.34, in Hristea, 1984, p.140)⁵.

Beyond phrases in Romanian (or *locuțiuni*), there are elements such as expressions, which are defined as “All linguistic combinations of the type clause/sentence and a functional unit which yield an expressive value when compared with a non-idiomatic synonym”⁶⁷ (Our translation) (Căpățână, 2007, p.52). Within this category elements such as idioms can be grouped.

THE MANY FORMS OF A UNIT OF TRANSLATION (UT)

As a complex process, translation must consider a multitude of text features. Depending on their preferences, translators may select what they consider to be the most adequate units of translation as their working style, ranging from smallest units (words or even units smaller than words) to larger units such as text fragments or whole texts.

The “traditional view” surrounding the unit of translation is given by Peter Newmark, who based his definition “on Vinay’s and Darbelnet’s concept and Haas’s description” (Newmark, 1988, p. 54, as cited in Zhu, 1999, p. 432), namely that the unit of translation is “the smallest segment of a SL text which can be translated, as a whole, in isolation from other segments” and which could be “small as is possible and as large as is necessary” (Newmark, 1988, p.54, as cited in Zhu, 1999, p. 432).

⁴ “grup de cuvinte mai mult sau mai puțin sudat care are un înțeles unitar și se comportă din punct de vedere gramatical ca o singură parte de vorbire”

⁵ A similar definition can be found in the most recent Romanian Language Dictionary I accessed online (Dicționarul Explicativ al Limbii Române, 2016): *Locuțiune* = “Un grup de cuvinte cu înțeles unitar, care se comportă din punct de vedere gramatical ca o singură parte de vorbire”

⁶ “Toate îmbinările de tip propoziție sau frază cu unități funcționale și cu valoare expresivă evidentă în raport cu un sinonim neexpresiv (...)”

⁷ In this manner Căpățână comments on the definition of “expresie” provided in the Romanian Dictionary of Language Science (Dicționar de Științe ale Limbii)

Nevertheless, there has been a rethinking of such a definition, so that the unit of translation is regarded “as an independent but not isolated unit” (Zhu, 1999, p.433), and the definition of this unit is “the smallest element of an SL text which can be translated as an independent and integrated meaning entity in relation to other segments of the text” (Zhu, 1999, p.433).

In order for a language unit to qualify as a translation unit, it has to fulfill certain requirements, “at least three functions” (Zhu, 1999, p.436): contribute to grammatical accuracy as well as textual cohesion and coherence, carry meaning, and function as a “stylistic marker”, to fulfill “the textual intention better” and the acceptance of “the text’s genre membership and textual individuality” (Zhu, 1999, p. 436).

In the light of these observations, and given how “the size of a UT is decided by translators’ techniques, their cognitive capacity and the type of document” (Zhu, 1999, p.442), the unit of translation I have decided to focus on varies in length depending on the type of element (phrase, collocation, idiom). A sentence may be a good option for a unit of translation, given its “role as an essential grammatical unit and fundamental dynamic unit of communication” (Zhu, 1999, p.439), and because it also contextualizes “the information it carries” (Zhu, 1999, p.439). For instance, the examples for calculation in Snover et al. were sentences. However, in my study I will rely on phrases as units of translation.

THE CONTEXT FOR ERROR PROVISION

The case brief transcript I have chosen for this study is taken from a legal case, titled *Philipp (Respondent) v Barclays Bank UK PLC (Appellant)* (Case ID: 2022/0075), from the UK’s Supreme Court website, and which can also be found on the BAILII Database (British and Irish Legal Information Institute). I have received the approval for using the legal cases posted on the website by email from Mr Paul Sandles, Librarian and Departmental Records Officer of the Supreme Court (supremecourt.uk). This legal case deals with an elderly couple who had fallen prey to an online scammer (a certain JW, possibly helped by other yet unidentified criminals) posing as a reliable source to deposit part of their life savings, which resulted in them losing a significant part of their money (The Supreme Court UK, Case ID: 2022/0075). The bank (Barclay’s Bank UK) where the couple had deposited their savings performed the required transfer operations without asking any questions or making any minute inquiries.

I used Google Translate to see how well the automated tool dealt with translating the legal case, after which I decided to focus on errors of style and instances of figurative language use. The table provided below represents a sample of the errors found by translating the legal case with Google Translate.

In the table below I provided both source and target language fragments (in the first and second column), the units of translation and its improvement (*hypothesis* and *reference*) (in the third column) and their corresponding TER score, coupled with the error weight (fourth and final column). What is more, I also marked with CORR (as for correction) my improvements for the units of translation.

On the one hand, I got inspired from the study by Daems and Macken's study (2021), and I allowed myself to be influenced by the TER score: the higher the TER score, the bigger the error weight. On the other hand, there is a subjective element in the attribution of the error weight, based on my reckoning. For example, in the case of complete replacements, the score was 3 out of 3, while for minor errors I used a score of 1. The final score is provided below the error weight, but it is not rendered in percentages.

Table 1. Analysis of the Units of Translation

Source Language Context	Target Language Context	Unit of Translation (Hypothesis) and Reference	TER Score and Error Weight
1)Mrs Philipp brings this action against the bank for breach of duty.	Doamna Philipp introduce această acțiune împotriva băncii pentru încălcarea obligațiilor.	brings this action against = introduce această acțiune împotriva CORR formulează	TER score 33% (0,33) Error weight 1 Final Score: 0,33
2)The duty is characterised as a duty to observe reasonable care and skill in and about executing her instructions.	Obligația este caracterizată ca o datorie de a respecta atenția și priceperea rezonabilă în și cu privire la executarea instrucțiunilor ei.	observe reasonable care and skill = respecta atenția și priceperea rezonabilă CORR a manifesta o grijă și pricepere rezonabile	TER score 100 % (1) Error weight 3 Final Score: 3
3)It is also said to be a species of the duty identified by the High Court in Barclays Bank v Quincecare [1992] 4 All ER 363.	De asemenea, se spune că este o specie a îndatoririi identificate de Înalta Curte în cauza Barclays Bank v Quincecare [1992] 4 All ER 363.	a species of the duty = o specie a obligației identificate CORR un tip al obligației	TER score 50 % (0,50) Error weight 1 Final Score:0,50
4)One cannot reasonably feel anything other than acute sympathy for Mrs	Nu se poate simți în mod rezonabil altceva decât o simpatie acută pentru	(Feel) acute sympathy = simpatie acută	TER score 50 % (0,50) and TER score 100% (1)

Source Language Context	Target Language Context	Unit of Translation (Hypothesis) and Reference	TER Score and Error Weight
and Dr Philipp who have fallen victim to the dishonesty of JW and any of his partners in crime.	doamna și doctorul Philipp, care au căzut victime ale necinstei lui JW și a oricăruia dintre partenerii săi în crime.	CORR (a simți) <i>simpatie profundă</i> Partner in crime = partener în crimă CORR <i>complice la infracțiune</i>	Error weight 2, respectively 3 Final Scores:1, respectively 3
5)Although from the bank's point of view one can see that in the cases of instructions by agents, the duty also works for the benefit of the bank to save it from liability caused by acting without instructions, that is not the reason the duty exists.	Deși din punctul de vedere al băncii se poate observa că în cazurile de instrucțiuni ale agenților, datoria funcționează și în beneficiul băncii pentru a o salva de răspunderea cauzată de acțiunea fără instrucțiuni, nu acesta este motivul pentru care datoria există.	acting without instructions = acțiunea fără instrucțiuni CORR <i>Acțiunea fără îndrumare</i>	TER score 33% (0,33) Error weight 1 Final Score:0,33
6)The bank sought to soften this with the submission that the payment would not actually be made in such a case but only because of the bank's regulatory or anti-money laundering obligations.	Banca a încercat să atenueze acest lucru, susținând că plata nu s-ar face efectiv într-un astfel de caz, ci doar din cauza obligațiilor de reglementare sau de combatere a spălării banilor ale băncii.	because of the bank's regulatory or anti-money laundering obligations = din cauza obligațiilor de reglementare sau de combatere a spălării banilor ale băncii CORR: <i>Din cauza obligațiilor băncii de reglementare sau de combatere a spălării banilor</i>	TER score 0.8 % (0,083) Error weight 1 Final Score:0,08
7)The respondent emphasised that it was not obliged to question or advise on the commercial wisdom or otherwise of a particular transaction, and referred to the judgment of May LJ in Lipkin Gorman on this point.	Intimatul a subliniat că nu este obligat să pună la îndoială sau să ofere consiliere cu privire la înțelepciunea comercială sau altfel a unei anumite tranzacții și s-a referit la hotărârea May LJ în cauza Lipkin Gorman asupra acestui punct.	commercial wisdom or other = înțelepciunea comercială sau altfel CORR <i>Cunoștințele comerciale</i>	TER score 100% (1) Error weight 3 Final Score:3
8)Although based on a concession by counsel, like May LJ I believe that	Deși bazat pe o concesiune a avocatului, ca și May LJ, cred că	wide enough = suficient de largi	TER score 33% (0,33) Error weight 1

Source Language Context	Target Language Context	Unit of Translation (Hypothesis) and Reference	TER Score and Error Weight
concession was correct. Notably it is expressed in terms wide enough to cover the present case.	concesia a fost corectă. În special, este exprimată în termeni suficient de largi pentru a acoperi cazul de față.	<i>CORR suficient de interpretabili</i>	Final Score:0,33
9) It seems to me that if that [Barclays Bank v Simms] is a correct statement of the law it is really conclusive of this case, unless it can be said that there was something in the circumstances which were or should have been present to the bank's mind when the cheque was presented, which should have given it pause for thought.	Mi se pare că, dacă acea [Barclays Bank v Simms] este o declarație corectă a legii, aceasta este cu adevărat concludentă pentru acest caz, cu excepția cazului în care se poate spune că a existat ceva în circumstanțe care a fost sau ar fi trebuit să fie prezent la banca. minte când a fost prezentat cecul, ceea ce ar fi trebuit să-i dea o pauză de gândire.	bank's mind = la banca minte <i>CORR din perspectiva băncii</i>	TER score 100% (1) Error weight 3 Final Score:3
10)This again illustrates why this case ought not be decided on a summary basis.	Acest lucru ilustrează din nou de ce acest caz nu ar trebui să fie decis pe o bază sumară.	on a summary basis = pe o bază sumară <i>CORR În mod succint</i>	TER score 100% (1) Error weight 3 Final Score:3

THE ANALYSIS OF STYLE ERRORS

Considering the above segments, and the TER calculation, I have decided to present the errors in a list, but not without making certain observations and listing both the TER and WER score. The observations are meant to explain the original score (the TER score) and then afterwards the error weight and the final score are also provided. Next to each segment in the source language (Romanian), I explained the mistake made by Google Translate, such as “wrong noun” or “wrong verb” and provided my correction just as in the table above.

If we take the first example from the table above (e.g. *introduce o acțiune*), the wrong element is the verb *a introduce*. It will have to be substituted, therefore it will undergo a change, and this change will be considered in the calculation as one edit divided by the number of words contained by the *reference*. In this case, the

calculation is 1 (the single edit) divided by 3 (number of reference words), and the result is 0,33..., approximated and then converted to 33%.

Regarding the final score, it is not rendered into percentages, and it is heavily influenced by the TER score. In instances where only one element from the unit of translation was incorrect, I decided to assign an error weight of only 1, which did not impact the final result. However, in cases where the unit was made up of two parts (e.g. *simpatie acută*) and one of the elements was wrong, the weight was 2. Finally, in case a unit of translation was completely inadequate and needed total substitution, I assigned the most significant weight (3), which resulted in a much higher value than the initial one: the TER score had been 1, but the final score 3.

Snover et al. (2006) mention punctuation being taken into account for the TER calculation, which should have been the case for the (wrongly translated) segment *la banca. minte*, however, I did not consider punctuation as worth considering in the calculation.

- 1) 1 edit (substitution) *introduce o actiune*: wrong verb in verb phrase *introduce* instead of *formulează*; 1 divided by three words = TER score 33% (0,33)
- 2) substitution of the whole phrase in *observe reasonable care = a respecta atenția*, instead of *a manifesta o grijă*; 3 divided by 3 words = TER score 100 % (1)
- 3) 2 edits (substitutions) *o specie a obligatiei*: wrong noun chosen, *specie* instead of *tip*, and grammatical substitution (article adapted to gender in Romanian); TER score 50 % (0,50)
- 4) 1 substitution for the first noun phrase, but for the second unit 3 substitutions for a three-word noun phrase: NP *simpatie acută* TER score 50% (0,50) but the NP + PP *partener în crimă* 100% (1)
- 5) 1 edit (substitution) *acționarea fără instrucțiuni*: wrong noun in noun phrase *instrucțiuni*; TER score 33% (0,33)
- 6) One shift, the placement of the word *bancă*; 1 divided by 12 words = TER score 0.8 % (0,083)
- 7) 2 edit, wrong noun in the noun phrase *cunoștințele comerciale* instead of *înțelepciunea comercială*, and grammatical substitution; 2 divided by 2 words = TER score 100% (1)
- 8) 1 edit, wrong adjective in the adjective phrase *suficient de interpretabili* instead of *suficient de largi*; TER score 33% (0,33)
- 9) 3 edits, given the solution offered *la banca minte*, instead of *din perspectiva băncii*; 3 divided by 3 words = TER score 100% (1)

- 10) replacement of the idiom *pe o bază sumară* → *În mod succint*; complete TER score 100% (1)

CONCLUSIONS

While the TER score is efficient in indicating the possible quality of a segment, on the whole, Google Translate does a decent translation, given how the rest of the Case ID: 2022/0075 is appropriately translated. If I had applied the TER calculation to larger segments, then the number of mistakes (and therefore that of corrections) would have been lower, resulting in a low(er) TER score. What a low TER score signifies is the need for a more adequate translation.

I decided to focus on a TER score, but I have focused only on the changes I deemed necessary for the improvement of the output. Perhaps another translator (and scholar) would have preferred other changes or considered some of my improvements as instances of overcorrection, preferential changes (a possible candidate for this being fragment number 6). I think it would be interesting to apply the HTER and analyze the results of the calculation when the focus is only on mandatory changes, and then compare the HTER scores with those of the TER.

As for the adjustments in the application of the TER score, these could be amplified to include many other aspects, not just the error weight. In this manner the TER application could be much improved, by amplifying its degree of precision. The error weight alone does not seem to impact the final translation score, at least for this study, when focusing on smaller units of translation. Perhaps automated computation methods can be devised which can better suit such units of translation.

I consider this study to be useful in the application of the TER score on smaller segments, as well as for the exploration of other means of TER (and WER) applications and adjustments of such metrics. The study could be a starting point for future research conducted by scholars with much more expertise in the field of computational linguistics and cognitive linguistics, or who wish to apply the TER score to any units of translation they deem adequate for their studies.

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***Briskeby Blues* – A Method of Reshaping Reality through Voldian Poems Translated into Romanian**

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Abstract: The article presents the process of translating *Briskeby blues*. The first Norwegian-Romanian Bilingual Anthology of Poetry. This study mainly focuses on the challenges of translating poetry with reference to the variety of writing styles used by the Norwegian poet, Jan Erik Vold, in each of the poems selected from his eleven volumes. The untranslatability is another important aspect, especially when referring to ready-made poems, tongue twisters, nursery-rhyme-like poems, from the volume *kykelipi*, 1969, together with a series of specific Scandinavian words with no equivalent in Romanian. Typical for Vold's literary work is the fact that his poetic language embodies the simplicity of the surrounding world, together with the rhythm and the performative aspect of his poems, in the sense that he is well-known for his public appearances, giving recitals together with a jazz or blues orchestra. In this sense, the idea of poetry and jazz has its roots in the volume *Mor Godhjertas glade versjon. Ja* (Mother Goodhearted's Happy Version. Yes, 1968). Therefore, this project of translating Vold's poems with a diverse language register bridges the gap between the Norwegian and Romanian literary space, by understanding, according to Vold, the world that lives inside us, through simple and common words.

Keywords: *Briskeby blues*, translation, Norwegian poetry, Jan Erik Vold, *kykelipi*, *Mor Godhjertas glade versjon. Ja*.

"A poem cannot be translated, it can only be relieved in a different atmosphere"
(Rabindranath Tagore qtd. in (Gopalan, p. 58, 2023))

INTRODUCTION

BRISKEBY BLUES – THE FIRST NORWEGIAN-ROMANIAN BILINGUAL ANTHOLOGY OF POETRY

Briskeby blues. Tospråklig norsk-rumensk diktantologi/ Antologie bilingvă de poezie norvegiană-română, published with the financial support of NORLA (Norwegian Literature Abroad), in 2023 at Casa Cărții de Știință Publishing House, in the *Nordica* Collection, is a 432-page bilingual anthology that contains 320 poems selected from

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eleven volumes signed by the Norwegian poet Jan Erik Vold. This book is part of an academic project that began with the writing and publication of my PhD thesis entitled *The Poetry of Jan Erik Vold and the Norwegian Lyric Modernism in the 1960s* and culminated with the publishing of this bilingual edition of *concrete* and *new simple* Norwegian poems. The eleven volumes are in a chronological order: *mellom speil og speil* (*Between Mirror and Mirror*, 1965), *blikket* (*The Gaze*, 1966), *HEKT* (*Grab*, 1966), *Mor Godhjertas glade versjon. Ja* (*Mother Goodhearted's Happy Version. Yes*, 1968), *kykelipi* (1969), *spor, snø* (*Traces, Snow*, 1970), *Bok 8: LIV* (*Book 8: LIFE*, 1973), *S* (1978), *Sorgen. Sangen. Veien* (*The Pain. The Song. The Road*, 1987), *En som het Abel Ek* (*One Named Abel Ek*, 1988), *Store hvite bok å se* (*The Great White Book to See*, 2011). As lecturer Ioana Mureșan states in the book review of this anthology, published in the 2nd issue of *Studia. Philologia – Perspectives on the Scandinavian Cultural Imaginary*, in 2023:

These poems are a source of inspiration for everyone who wants to learn and read Norwegian. The typographical poems disposed in different forms, the meditative ones teeming with Eastern influence, the city poems resembling the map of Oslo, as well as those about friends and dear memories, all bring together the two concepts, *new simplicity* and *concretism*, as two unique poetic features which invite the reader to discover the Norwegian culture from Vold's perspective, [...] (Mureșan, 2023, p. 327).

The launch of this anthology in April 2024 generated a special cultural event at the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature because Jan Erik Vold participated as a special guest for the first time in Cluj-Napoca. He was present at the launch of this anthology and held the lecture entitled *Thoughts on Poetry* for our students who study Norwegian. In this sense, he was very pleased to meet our students and he admired their interest in his poems and the questions they asked. He also recited a few poems, something that made his lecture more entertaining and engaging. I also invited him to read his poems from *Briskeby blues* being accompanied by jazz within the Nordic Poetry Circle – *DiktLek*, which I founded in the spring of 2022. Professor Henning Howlid Wærp was another important guest who was invited to this recital. He was my PhD coordinator during my research scholarship at The Arctic University of Norway, in Tromsø. Furthermore, together with my students, I read the poems into Romanian for those who did not know Norwegian. I confess that it was very challenging to read out the translation of these poems, especially when thinking about the rhythm and the pace I had to use.

The presence of Jan Erik Vold in Cluj at our Department generated a wave of cultural interviews. For instance, Doina Borgovan from Radio Cluj interviewed him, being proud that she had the occasion to meet one of the most important contemporary Norwegian poets, who has been considered as part of the Norwegian literary canon

since 2006. In her interview entitled “The Poet Who is Looking for a Tram” she made reference especially to “Mother Goodhearted’s Happy Version”. Yes, Vold’s bestseller volume of poetry from 1968. Here, the poet “sings the reality” (Interview Radio Cluj), or to put it differently, “you have to expose yourself to everything that surrounds you” (Interview Radio Cluj). In addition, Vold pointed out that he likes both Cluj and the trams, which made him remember Briskeby, a neighborhood in Oslo where he lived when he was a student at the University of Oslo.

In the independent newspaper, *Făclia*, Iulia Ghidui took me an interview related to Jan Erik Vold’s poems, especially those published in the above-mentioned anthology, *Briskeby blues*. The main point of the interview intitled “Jan Erik Vold’s Poems are Like a Map”, was to underline the idea that Vold’s poems could be easily used both in teaching Norwegian literature and language for our students. Hence, the frequency of simple and common words used by Vold in his poems helps the students in their process of language acquisition. Due to the fact that there are many everyday words and expressions in his poems, it is clear that teachers can use his poems as very useful and inspiring materials for students when teaching specific skills in Norwegian.

“Jan Erik Vold – The Renowned Norwegian Word Architect and Performer” is the title that I gave to the interview with Jan Erik Vold published in 2023 in the 2nd issue of the literary magazine *Studia Philologia*, an issue dedicated entirely to Scandinavian cultural imaginary. It was a real pleasure for me to interview Vold for the second time. He states right from the beginning that “[this] anthology is nicely done and gives a rich picture of my poetry. The foreword and the interview at the end of the book make a solid background for an interested reader” (Vold in Duinea, 2023 a, p. 286). He also mentioned that he was very impressed to see our students being captivated by the Norwegian literature and by his poetry in particular and he hoped to come back to Cluj one day. He also talked about the relation between jazz and poetry, stating that “there is music in poetry. I was in the happy position to get in touch with some of the finest jazz musicians in Norway, [...]. My ‘background’ was that I started listening to jazz when I was very young” (Vold in Duinea, 2023 a, p. 287). Another important idea stated by Vold was that, as a writer, you can be both serious and playful with the language. He chose to make ‘funny’ poems because the readers love them a lot.

In what follows, I will briefly present a few aspects related to the variety of writing styles in the eleven volumes that I included in the anthology, *Briskeby blues*, followed by theoretical concepts and elements that I used regarding the translation of his poems, and then I conclude with a close reading approach of a selection of

poems taken from *kykelipi* and *Mother Goodhearted's Happy Version*. Yes. The main point of these text analyses is to focus on specific translation skills that I used when dealing with Vold's poetic universe. In the end, I will wrap it all up in a brief conclusion in order to point out the main aspects regarding the translation of Vold's poems into Romanian.

To be more efficient, within my paper I will use acronyms for source text (SL), target text (TT), source language (SL) and target language (TL).

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

Jan Erik Vold made his debut as a poet in 1965 with the volume *mellom speil og speil* (*Between Mirror and Mirror*). He created his poems aiming at different categories of readers, among which we can name at least two of them, the traditional and the modern. His use of variety of writing styles can be categorized into two main concepts: *concretism* and *nyenkelhet* (*new simplicity*). If *concretism* may be classified in terms of nursery rhymes, ready-made poems, tongue twisters, grammatical poems, and typographical poems, the concept of *new simplicity* can be analysed regarding the way the poet reshapes reality through simple and common words taken from the surrounding world. To put it differently, Vold uses things like a chair, a mirror, a wave, an hourglass, tramlines, a loaf, names of friends, of places, of streets, in order to create his own simple and at the same time unique poetic register.

I had the great opportunity to approach Vold's literary work both as a researcher and as a translator. I have to admit that I enjoy working with his poems from both sides the only difference was that as a translator I had the opportunity to be part of the creative process, having the possibility to invent words and to rewrite poems into Romanian. It was not easy to do this, mostly because according to Cay Dollerup "a translation is tied up with culture" (Dollerup, 2006, p. 104) and in Norwegian culture there are concepts and words that can be untranslatable because we simply do not have them in our culture. As a consequence, in the case of Vold, the source language being Norwegian, it is quite different from the target language, which is Romanian. In this sense, there were words and expressions for which I couldn't find the right word in Romanian because "[...] the language does not have identical and symmetrical vocabularies" (Dollerup, 2006, p. 103). Before beginning the translation itself, it might be useful to take into consideration the following aspects stated by Peter Newmark in his book *Approaches to Translation*: "the intention of the text", "the intention of the translator", "the reader and the setting

of the text” and “the quality of the writing and the authority of the text” (Newmark, 1981, pp. 21-22).

On the one hand, Professor Susan Bassnett mentioned in her book entitled *Translation Studies* the seven different methods of translating a poem used by the Belgian theorist André Lefevere in his book *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint*. One of the methods is *the phonemic translation*, which tries to capture the sense of the poem while reproducing the sound of the SL into the TL. Lefevere associates the sound with the onomatopoeic words, which are a real challenge to transpose into the TL. The other methods are *literal translation*, or *interlinear* (Jones, 2011, p. 1), which is a word-for-word rendition, *metrical translation*, which refers to metrical reproduction, *poetry into prose*, *rhymed translation*, *blank verse translation* and in the end *interpretation*. From all these, the ones that can be used when translating Vold’s poems are the *phonemic translation* for the poems from *kykelipi* and the *blank verse translation*.

On the other hand, Francis Jones, in his book *Poetry Translation as Expert Action: Processes, Priorities and Networks* makes use of “paratexts (back-up materials)” either in the introduction or in footnotes within the translated text. In other words, “[...] poetry translators who communicate with readers do more simply understanding and rewriting poems. [...] Moreover, poetry translators participate in wider social and cultural processes” (Jones, 2011, p. 3). From my own perspective, these ‘paratexts’ are very useful because, with their help, the translator can clarify better, for instance, the untranslatable word or those words that cannot cross the ‘cultural barrier’. Here I refer to specific Scandinavian words that have no equivalent in Romanian language (e.g. *en spark* – which is a specific type of Scandinavian sleigh, or *svaberg* – coastal rock etc.).

This idea of ‘paratexts’ can be linked with the *culture levelling* concept used by Françoise Wuilmart in his paper entitled “Normalization and the Translation of Poetry”, “people tend to forget that the translation of a text is part of the translation of a culture. Any source language expresses a particular world vision which may be extremely different from the world vision expressed by the target language” (Wuilmart, 1999, p. 33).

When translating Vold’s poems, the translator has to be creative in the sense that there are words in Norwegian that do not necessarily mean something and so they have to be invented in Romanian. “[...] Poetry translation is often popularly seen as ‘creative’. Translators may feel that reproducing all the semantic content and poetic features in a source poem is impossible or that doing so might confuse the message being signalled in the poems” (Jones, 2011, p. 38). *Kykelipi* consists of

poems that invite the translator to be part of the creative process, and I will elaborate on this idea in the next subchapter, where I will analyse a few poems selected from this volume.

Going further into this brief theoretical background concerning different concepts and elements a translator should take note of, Françoise Wuilmart stated that *the stylistic levelling* is also very important because the translator also has to be perceptive with respect to the author's freedom (Wuilmart, 1999, p. 35). To put it differently, "a rare and a strong word must be translated into another rare and strong word. And the other way around" (Wuilmart, 1999, p. 35). In this case, I sometimes chose to leave the word exactly as it is in SL and eventually use an explanatory footnote in order to ensure text accuracy. Wuilmart points out metatranslation, which emphasises the idea that in order to preserve the meaning of a poem, the translator "has to use extra resources, extratextual elements. Verlaine's German translators understood this very dimension: they left aside the 'violins' and the 'sanglots' and choose other words, other 'objects', the sounds and tones of which generate, in German, the sadness and the melancholy expressed by Verlaine" (Wuilmart, 1999, p. 36-37).

This idea was also stated by Rafael Burton in his book *The Art of Translating Poetry*, in which he pointed out that "there are *always* significant aspects of the original literary work that cannot be reproduced in the new language. [...]. Not two languages having the same phonology, [...] the same syntactic structure, [...] the same vocabulary, [...] the same literary history, [...] the same prosody" (Burton, 1988, p. 12).

Equally important for translators of poetry and for translators in general is to be fluent in the TL and, at the same time, to be aware of their 'invisibility'. Lawrence Venuti emphasises these two ideas in his book *The Translator's Invisibility – A History of Translation*. Here he points out that "the illusion of transparency is an effort of a fluent translation strategy, of the translator's effort to ensure easy readability by adhering to current usage, maintaining continuous syntax, fixing a precise meaning. [...]. The more fluent the translation the more invisible the translator, and, presumably, the more visible the writer or meaning of the foreign text" (Venuti, 2008, p. 1). Eugen Albert Nida summarises this idea by using the phrase '*naturalness of expression*' (Nida qtd. in Venuti 2008, p. 16).

Regarding the literary work of Jan Erik Vold, it is important to note that he signed more than twenty volumes of poetry, each being written in a different poetic style. In *Briskeby blues* I included eleven titles, in chronological order: *mellom speil og speil* (*Between Mirror and Mirror*, 1965), *blikket* (*The Gaze*, 1966), *HEKT* (*Grab*, 1966),

Mor Godhjertas glade versjon. Ja (*Mother Goodhearted's Happy Version. Yes*, 1968), *kykelipi* (1969), *spor, snø* (*Traces, Snow*, 1970), *Bok 8: LIV* (*Book 8: LIFE*, 1973), *S* (1978), *Sorgen. Sangen. Veien* (*The Pain. The Song. The Road*, 1978), *En som het Abel Ek* (*One Named Abel Ek*, 1988), *Store hvite bok å se* (*The Great White Book to See*, 2011). Even if *Between Mirror and Mirror* was approached as a traditional volume regarding the message of the poems, it is also combined with modern features such as the typographical poems having different shapes, which was a novelty for the Norwegian literature of that time. The other ten volumes were a breakthrough in Norwegian literature, beginning with those published in the 1960s and culminating with the most recent ones. For instance, if *The Gaze* is a concrete poem made of only five words, in *Grab* the reader can find a variety of concrete poems where the poet uses different common words, sometimes giving an absurd meaning. In *Mother Goodhearted's Happy Version. Yes*, Vold changes the register and uses more personalised poems taken from everyday life. He writes about friends, streets, places, neighbourhoods, tramlines, loaf, the pine trees, and the wooden houses, which are landmarks for the city of Oslo and which, unfortunately, for the most part were demolished to build something modern instead. In the volume *kykelipi* he uses another poetic register, being more focused on the ludic poetry. *Traces, Snow* is a haiku volume of poetry. *Bok 8: LIFE* and *S* presents the meditative poetry from a Zen Buddhist perspective. *The Pain. The Song. The Road* somehow restates the idea of *new simplicity* from *Mother Goodhearted's Happy Version. Yes*, but using intertextuality and nature as key elements for his poems. In *One Named Abel Ek*, we have for the first time a protagonist, Abel, who could be the alter ego of the poet. Finally, *The Great White Book to See* brings back Vold's dear childhood and adolescence memories transposed into verses.

TRANSLATING WORDPLAY IN *KYKELIPI*

The volume *kykelipi* was the most challenging, especially when thinking about the process of adapting the TL to different types of poetry used by Vold in the same volume. *kykelipi* is an invention of the poet, its origin being in fact an onomatopoeic word referring to the way a rooster crows. While in Norwegian the rooster crows *kykeliky*, in Romanian it sounds like *cucurigu*, while in English it is *cock-a-doodle-do*. It is worth mentioning that this volume contains tongue twisters, nursery rhymes, ready-mades, grammatical poems, and even nonsense poems. Related to the last category, I became part of the creative process, and I had to invent words in Romanian.

Here, I refer especially to the nonsense poem “kulturuke”. The process of translating and adapting the ST to the TT was full of challenges. Firstly, I had to find an appropriate title in Romanian, namely “culturala”. Secondly, I thought that the number of letters that form the word in Norwegian and those which form the word in Romanian should be equal, and thirdly maybe the most important part was to invent other 23 words following Vold’s pattern and the order in which the letters were arranged in the ST. The translation of this poem became an elaborate mechanism that looked like a crossword. The title in TL means “cultural week”, and in Romanian the meaning is also close to the one in Norwegian, namely “culturala”. The first word from this poem in SL is “ulturkuke”, while in Romanian is “ulturcala”, followed by “tulkuruke” in SL and “tulcurala” in TL. Both words have five consonants, k, l, t, r, k in the ST and c, l, t, r, l in the TL, and four vowels each. The only difference between “kulturuke” and “culturala” is that the first one is ending in “-uke” and the second one in “-ala”, and this fact produces a lot of changes in the process of word-invention, namely, “ukturkule” in SL becomes “alturcula” in TL. While “kulturuke” gives a specific Scandinavian assonance, “culturala” with the two a-vowels is more open, and the assonance differs from the word in the SL. When reading the two poems, the reader should note that they have a different ‘singability’ (Dollerup, 2006, p. 105) they sound differently because the phonetics of the two languages are different. For instance, the vowel ‘u’ is pronounced differently in Norwegian and in Romanian. Moreover, for this poem, it was important to ‘translate’ the rhythm because the whole poem can be used as a diction exercise both in SL and in TL.

“Om kriveligheten” is a poem that contains a paratext in order to explain to the reader the wordplay used by Vold. In other words, “kriveligheten” is a word invented by the poet, and if we unscramble this word it becomes “virkeligheten” (“reality” in Norwegian). In the TL I chose to translate this invented word through “scrialitate”: “Scrialitatea/ spui tu, scrialitatea/ este mult mai scrială/ decât realitatea, [...]” (Duinea, 2023 c, p. 174). This poem can also be regarded as a metatranslation because in order to preserve the meaning of the whole poem I chose to use specific invented words that can restate the meaning of the poem while at the same time getting closer to the Romanian reader. I also took note of the *stylistic levelling* used by the professor of translation studies, Françoise Wuilmart, trying to find an equivalent to the invented Norwegian word *kriveligheten*, that I could use in the TL.

In the nursery rhyme poem entitled “1-2-3-4”, the challenge was to apply the rhymed translation method also approached by the theorist André Lefevere

(Lefevere qtd. in Bassnett, 2002, p. 87). In the SL the first two verses were “1-2-3-4/ kykelipire” and in the TL the rendition is as follows “1-2-3-4/ kykelilatra”. The poem is formed of numbers and invented words, which all begin with the nonsense word “kykeli”. The last part of each of these four words had each to rhyme with the following numbers: 4, which is *fire* in Norwegian, then with 8 – *åtte*, 12 – *tolv* and 9 – *ni*. By translating the poem into Romanian, I had to follow the same pattern and to make the numbers rhyme with the last part of each word. In the TT each of the four words begins with the same word used in the ST, namely *kykeli*. Besides using the *rhymed translation* method, I also had to ‘render’ the rhythm of the poem, choosing the four-syllable word “kykelilatra” to rhyme with 4 (*patru* in Romanian), “kykelilopt” to rhyme with 8 – *opt*, “kykeliloişpe” to rhyme with 12 – *doişpe* and finally, “kykelilouă” to rhyme with 9 – *nouă*. I intentionally used in the TL the same part of the word, *kykeli*, which is also repeating in the SL, in order to preserve the message signaled in the Norwegian poem. Within this context, I used another method stated by André Lefever, that is the *phonemic translation*, which refers especially to onomatopoeic words and “[which reproduces] the sound of the SL into the TL” (Lefever qtd. in Jones, 2011, p. 2). I considered it useful for the Romanian reader to introduce a paratext as a footnote to explain the origin of the word *kykelipi*. However, instead of *kykeli* I could have also used *cucuri* (e.g. “cucurilatra”, “cucurilopt”, “cucuriloişpe” and “cucurilouă”) which is part of the *cucurigu* sound in Romanian, but I considered it more interesting for the readers to invent words being half Norwegian and half Romanian. In addition, to emphasise the significance of the use of assonance in nursery rhymes, I also focused my attention on the voiced consonant *l* in the last syllable of each of the four words in the TT: *kykelilatra*, *kykelilopt*, *kykeliloişpe* and *kykelilouă*, while in the ST, Vold used the voiceless consonant *p*. In order to translate this poem, I used both the *rhymed translation* method and preserved the rhythm of the poem with the help of the assonance given by the consonant *l*, which plays an important role in creating nursery rhymes in general.

“Krets” (“Circle”) is another poem selected from the above-mentioned volume, *kykelipi*. The important aspect of this short poem is that it seems to be a visual one even if the words are not arranged in a circle form, the meaning being the one which creates this visual image, while the assonance is giving the poem a special sound and vibration (e.g. “griper/ [...] hud, griper/ [...] ord, griper [...] / [...], griper/ [...] jord”). In this case, I have also applied to both *phonemic translation* and *blank verse translation* methods. For instance, in the ST the emphasis is set on the verb “griper”, while in the TT the verb is “prinde” and the poem in TL is to a certain

extent more rhythmic: “prind/ de piele, prinde/ de cuvinte, prinde de/ piele, prinde/ de pământ” (Duinea, 2023 c, p. 229). The two assonat sounds that repeats in TT are: “pri” and “pie”, giving the poem a special rhythm.

Another style approached by Vold in *kykelipi* is reflected in the category entitled grammatical poems. “GIR” (“GIVES”) is part of this category, and in this case, when translating it, I approached the *poetry into prose* method. “[...] the poem ‘GIR’ seems to be generated by a teacher-student conversation during a class in grammar, while analysing the Norwegian main sentence: ‘SONJA GIVES THE HORSE SUGAR’” (Răduț, 2018, p. 152). In order to make it more vivid and to look like a conversation between a teacher and a student, the poet uses different statements, questions, and he even states some grammar rules based on the above-mentioned sentence written in capital letters: “Sonja is subject/ What does Sonja give?/ SUGAR. Sugar is object/ To whom or to what gives Sonja sugar?/ To the HORSE. Which becomes indirect object” (Vold trans. in Răduț, 2018, p. 152).

To sum up, the poems from the volume *kykelipi* are a real challenge when it comes to translating them into Romanian, firstly because they are very different (e.g. tongue twisters, nursery rhymes, grammatical poems, etc.), and secondly because the translator has also to read between the lines. To put it another way, the translator has to notice the implicit meaning of the poem besides the explicit one. And I am referring here to the challenge of rendering the *irony*, the so-called *snakketonen* (*the spoken tone*), which Vold used for the first time in Norwegian literature in 1968 when he published his volume *Mother Goodhearted’s Happy Version. Yes*, and last but not least, the *humour*, a representative tendency very often used also in *kykelipi*. In fact, *kykelipi* is Vold’s indirect invitation to the reader to have fun, being a ‘provocation’ (Wærp in Duinea 2023 b, p. 18) to laughter and amusement.

As regards the next subchapter of this paper, I will emphasise the idea of translating *new simple* poems from Jan Erik Vold’s volume entitled *Mother Goodhearted’s Happy Version. Yes*.

MOTHER GOODHEARTED’S HAPPY VERSION. YES – TRANSLATING THE NEW SIMPLICITY

To begin with, the poems from this volume were one of the most popular in Norwegian literature in the second half of the 1960s. What made them famous at that time was the *spoken tone* used to present life as it is with simple and common words like tramlines, the white bread, the wooden houses, describing the city of Oslo, naming different streets and his neighbourhood, Briskeby, and using the

name of one of the poet's closest friends. Furthermore, in 1969 was released the *Briskeby blues* CD with poems recited by Vold being accompanied by Jan Garbarek Quartet.

The method I used when I translated most of the poems from the volume *Mother Goodhearted's Happy Version*. Yes, was the *blank verse translation* and sometimes *interlinear translation* in order to assure the flow of the text in Romanian. In order to emphasis the challenges of translating this volume, I will analyse and comment upon three of Vold's poems, namely, "Bo på Briskeby blues" ("Living in Briskeby blues"), "Trikkesskinnediktet" ("Tramlines") and "Tale for loffen" ("Speech for the White Bread").

"Bo på Briskeby blues", a four-line poem made of fifty-seven stanzas, is a poem which becomes resonant with the poet's memories related to Briskeby neighbourhood, where he spent the period when he was a student at the University of Oslo. The process of translating this poem implied a lot of work and research in the sense that I had to find the most suitable words and expressions in Romanian in order to create the Norwegian atmosphere from the 1960s. Moreover, I researched and approached different terms and names of historical and emblematic persons who lived in Briskeby by using a few explanatory footnotes to make the text more readable and fluent in the TL especially when the poet used a lot of intertext containing different names of his friends, of places and streets in Oslo. In that case, the reader can use these poems as a map, which encapsulates the city of Oslo with names of streets, places, and buildings. So, the Romanian reader is indirectly invited to take a walk through the city of Oslo together with the poet. The mood and the tone of the poem were also 'caught' within the whole act of translation. The poet uses a bitter irony when he presents the whole process of demolishing the ancestral wooden houses from Briskeby, which are emblematic for the local culture. In order to emphasise his disappointment, Vold scrambled the word NORGE (Norway) by using GNORE. In order to preserve his ironical tone, I also scrambled the word NORVEGIA (Norway) into VENORGIA. I made up this word on purpose, to follow Vold's pattern when thinking to unscramble the word by using the medial syllabus NOR followed by the consonant G and the vowel E. Thus, VENORGIA unscrambles the same NOR-VE-GIA. In order to make the content accessible to the reader, the length of the lines in the TT is often longer than the length in the ST. For example, if in Norwegian a phrase is made of only two words, in Romanian there might be four or even more words. This happens because of the "lack of symmetry in languages" (Dollerup, 2006, p. 104). The concept of *new simplicity* in this poem is reflected through the everyday 'short stories' transposed into verses with such

artistry by Vold and through the urban poetry, which, in this case, aims at mapping the city of Oslo. He uses this concept for the first time in Norwegian literature through common words taken from the surrounding reality. In this case, “Living in Briskeby blues” is an expansive poem that presents things exactly as they were, making the poetic act more vivid and close to the readers’ concerns.

“Trikkeskinnekiktet” (“Tramlines”) is another *new simple* urban poem, recited by Vold together with a jazz band. According to the poet “Det er jo ikke skrevet noen dikt om trikkeskinner! Det var dårlig, så vakre de er.’ Man skal ha bodd i by for å se den skjønnheten – skinnene går parallelt, og det gir alltid formasjoner. [...] Så ble det et trikkeskinnekikt”² (Hagen, 1993, p. 224-225). Listening both to the jazz band and to the poet reading his own creation, a specific tonality and rhythm are created, along with a very pleasant and engaging atmosphere. The title of the poem in the SL is a compound noun, “Trikkeskinnekiktet”, made of three words, “trikk” (“tram”) + “skinne” (“rail”) + “dikt” (“poem”). In the TT I preserved the three-word title, “Poezia șinelor de tramvai”, but not in a compound word because there isn’t an equivalent for it in Romanian. I used the *blank verse translation* method and a single paratext to explain the word *øre* (100 *øre* is equivalent to one Norwegian crown). In this case, the *new simplicity* is equivalent to the word taken right from the very heart of the city of Oslo, namely the “tramlines”.

I chose to preserve the names of the streets exactly as they are in the ST in order to assure the fluency of the text in the TL and to underline my ‘invisibility’ as a translator and not to interfere so much in the ST. For instance, the two names of the streets, *Theresegate* and *Sporveisgata*, appear the same in the TT, without using them as compound nouns, *Therese + gate* (*Therese Street – Strada Therese*). I did this thing on purpose, taking into account the concept of *culture levelling*, and trying to use the original words for keeping the essence and the fluency of the text in the TL. For the same reason I preserved the Norwegian word *øre* in the TT. Moreover, when translating these expansive poems from *Mother Goodhearted’s Happy Version*. Yes, I kept especially the names of the street untranslated to reshape different maps of Oslo from different neighbourhoods. Within this framework, the text becomes more vivid and more real, emphasising better the concept of *new simplicity*, which is specific for the Scandinavian countries.

With regard to “Tale for loffen” (“Speech for the White Bread”), the first challenge was the translation of the word “loffen” which in English is “white bread”

² “No poem about tramlines has ever been written! It is sad, because they are so beautiful. One has to live in the city in order to see that beauty – the lines are parallel and they always give forms. [...] Thus, it became a tramline poem” (Our translation).

and into Romanian is “franzelă”. At this point, after looking up in different dictionaries, reading different articles, and even looking for some pictures with the “white bread”, I adopted the *cultural levelling* method and decided to use the word “franzelă” in the TL. The reason was, on the one hand because the assonance of the word “franzelă” is less common than of the word “pâine albă”, and on the other hand, because “franzelă” is most receptor-oriented. In this case, the Romanian reader visualizes the two words quite differently. While “franzelă” is seen as an oblong loaf, “pâine albă” can either be oblong or round. Moreover, the English word for “franzelă” is “loaf” which is closer to the Norwegian word “loffen”. So, besides translating the whole poem, I had to do research on different words and expressions in order to keep the accuracy of the text in the TL. Besides, instead of using the English word for “tale” (“speech”), in the TT I chose to use the Romanian word “cuvântare” in order to create a special language register suitable for the 1960s and also because the word in TL is more solemn. Consequently, being able to emphasise better the humour and the irony. Here, the *new simplicity* is equivalent with *bread* or with the word “loffen”, “the fresh and piping” (Vold trans. in Răduț, 2018, p. 225) bread on everyone’s table. It is important to state that this white bread is even personified by the poet, being “everyone’s friend/ in the category of bread” (Vold trans. in Răduț, 2018, p. 224).

Thus far, by reading these expansive poems from the volume *Mother Goodhearted’s Happy Version*. Yes, one can easily understand that the concept of *new simplicity* embraces different perspectives, including the urban Norwegian poetry with its simple things taken from everyday reality, common words like “loffen” or “tramlines” “wooden houses”, or short stories transposed into verses about different neighborhoods from Oslo, as for instance, *Briskeby*.

CONCLUSIONS

Taking all these things into consideration, Jan Erik Vold’s literary work can become a very effective tool regarding the process of translation because his poems are built on different writing styles, some are rhymed, others are rhythmic, a few poems are made of wordplay, while other volumes promote either the concept of *concretism* or *nyenkelheten* (*the new simplicity*). The process of rendering Vold’s poems into Romanian also implies intuition and the translator’s aesthetic sense to arrange them in different forms, keeping the same pattern used initially in the ST.

Therefore, in order to keep the accuracy, the readability, and even the ‘singability’ of the poems, the translator’s skills have to be quite versatile in the

sense that they have to find the right resources to adapt themselves to Vold's different writing styles. The bilingual anthology, *Briskeby blues*, illustrates in a very clear manner all the aforementioned translating methods, which can be regarded as important theoretical mechanisms that have a great contribution in creating Vold's unique poetic universe into Romanian.

The irony, the rhythm, the untranslatability, the humour, the 'spoken tone', the *new simplicity*, all these imply substantial engagement and knowledge in order to be able to translate Vold's poems into Romanian. Moreover, the performative aspect has to be also included in the translated poems, which means that the poems must be both readable and rhythmical, ready to be recited in public, accompanied by a jazz or blues orchestra. To achieve the flow in the TL and the naturalness of expression, the translator has to use equivalent words and expressions with cultural resonance, presenting life in general and city life exactly as it is, without transforming it into something else.

The first edition of the bilingual anthology *Briskeby blues* and the visit of Jan Erik Vold in Cluj at the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature strengthened the intercultural relations between the Norwegian and the Romanian literary spaces.

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Translating Children's Books, Bridging Cultures, Re-Creating *Wonderlands* – A Multicultural Perspective of Children's Graphic Novels

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Abstract: Living in a world that is fundamentally multicultural has left its imprint on children's literature as well. There is an increased interest in publishing and promoting children's books of various genres and topics, which address young readers of various ages. The present paper will explore various aspects related to the translation of children's books that make it possible for this genre to create bridges between cultures, some of which are strikingly different, only to receive new meaning complemented by readers from other corners of the world. Such aspects include: explaining how translation transfers meaning and context to the new culture, addressing specific cultural markers, proper and descriptive names and their interplay in how cultural meaning is conveyed, creating an appropriate narrative voice. Further on, the paper will discuss the challenges posed by children's graphic novels, the contest between the wealth of visual information and rendering appropriate, yet creative and nuanced translations of the written text, finding perfect counterparts for onomatopoeia, which most often differ from culture to culture, in the quest to communicate a culturally valid message that also preserves and remains true to the original piece. The paper will conclude that "wonderlands" (a term metaphorically referencing *Alice in Wonderland*) represent those works which are so seamlessly translated that their meaning remains iconic across various languages and cultures.

Keywords: *translation, graphic novels, translation studies, children's literature, multicultural perspectives*

INTRODUCTION

We live in a world that is essentially multicultural and diverse. Perhaps this aspect is all the more visible in postmodern literature, which fosters an increasingly diverse environment nowadays. Authors from all corners of the globe, of all genders, walks of life, possessing varying levels of education can publish literary works and have the chance to engage and find a target audience for their creativity. The same trend seems to be applying to children's literature as well, with the great variety of genres, themes and cultural approaches available.

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When it comes to the younger readership, preferences seem to be shifting. The constant digital immersion as well as the manner in which it is shaping our daily existence and culture, represents a firm influence in this direction. This is why newer genres of fiction available for younger readerships are constantly emerging. One such example is the graphic novel. Being a newer genre, with vast multicultural propensities, it raises several interesting dilemmas for translation studies, especially in what concerns the transfer of cultural meaning, the treatment of cultural markers as well as the challenge of bridging these gaps in order to create new fictional wonderlands for the new, multicultural and diverse generation of children.

TRANSLATION AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN CULTURES

The premise to start from, when thinking about the manner in which translation functions as a bridge between cultures, is Eco's (2001) idea who states that translation is not a mechanical shift between two languages, a word-for-word rendition of equivalents, but rather a shift between two cultures. This is especially valid for literary translations and it applies seamlessly to translations of children's books as well, be they graphic novels or any other kind of literary genres, addressed to younger readers of all ages. Literary translations represent a more particular field of translations, as the semantic content of the translation itself needs to integrate the cultural paradigm of the source text into the target language (Urian, 2020).

This argument becomes very much apparent when, for instance, considering literary translations from Norwegian to Romanian, due not only to the linguistic differences but mostly to the differing cultures the two languages belong to. Still, the cultural aspect is not only reflected in literary translations alone. In this respect, Urian (2020) offers the example of the word *hygge*. The English translation of the word settles for the term *coziness*, but it fails to encompass the full meaning the notion possesses in the original language, which also includes several other meanings, such as "*a form of everyday togetherness*", "*pleasant and highly valued everyday experience of safety, equality, personal wholeness and a spontaneous social flow*". The word doesn't have a perfect equivalent in Romanian and it has been taken as such from the original language (particularly in social media slang or in lifestyle books such as *Home Hygge. Cum să-ți transformi casa într-un cămin fericit*). This choice of retaining a foreign word in its original form can be considered an attempt to preserve its cultural integrity, otherwise incompletely rendered by settling for an equivalent in Romanian.

When discussing the translation of children's books, the cultural aspect doesn't seem to be at the forefront of translation or literary studies. This happens mostly because children's literature and translations of children's literature are possibly regarded as secondary to adult literature and translations of adult literature. However, this does not imply that the cultural factor in translations of children's books is not as important as in translations of adult literature. In fact, with newer genres of children's literature being promoted and popularized across nations and cultures (see the graphic novel as one such genre), translations of children's books need to factor in cultural aspects perhaps to an even greater degree than before.

Culture and multiculturalism are reflected more strongly in works of fiction today and especially so in children's literature. Gopalakrishnan (2010) considers that, with children's literature, multiculturalism should provide validation for all of children's experiences and this needs to include the diversity present in society today. With translation, one of the quests lies in rendering the same degree of meaning to the multicultural dimension as possible in the new language and making the final product relatable, relevant and meaningful for the readers in the new culture. This particular situation is also valid when dealing with such a genre as the graphic novel and translating it into a language where this type of literature doesn't have a strong cultural background. In such cultures, the graphic novel is received on the basis of a borrowed understanding, stemming from an appropriated loan culture of comics and what it represents in the USA. Such a form of appropriation of the graphic novel genre is present with translations into Romanian of children's graphic novels, for instance.

In the Romanian literary landscape, comic strips are not very strongly represented. 1891 is the year when the first magazine with comic strips was published in Romania, but it contained comics taken from foreign magazines (from Germany and Austria). This fact is also confirmed by Zanettin (2018) who states that European comics are "pseudo-originals" and "pseudo-translations", because of the different degrees of political (sometimes even cultural) censorship applied to the original texts. Only in 1893 do we have a first Romanian comic strip which was dedicated to children alone. While comic strips have existed and still exist as part of the Romanian cultural landscape, they cannot be considered a major or massive entertainment form, either for children or for adults. Most of the popular comics are still imported (in original form or translation) from the USA and are generally superhero comics. The graphic novel, which, put simply, should be understood as

a more evolved narrative universe based on comic strip practices and techniques, is an utterly new genre here, especially for the youngest of readers.

THE GRAPHIC NOVEL - A BRIEF THEORETICAL BASIS

Graphic novels are not a completely new literary genre. Artists have always found creative ways of telling stories with pictures (Petersen, 2011) and this idea is unequivocally valid for graphic novels as well. Kunzle (1990) is one of the first theoreticians to use the expression “graphic narrative” in an attempt to replace the generic use of the term “comics”, which is too unspecific, less culturally meaningful and more artistic than literary. Petersen (2011) further suggests that the term “graphic narrative”, which allows focusing on the two essential aspects: *graphic* (referring to the visual form of expression) and *narrative* (encompassing the crafted story, the literary element of the equation), is relevant in the context of the great variety of popular narrative art forms (see “manga”, “cergam”, “fumetti” etc.).

There is a generalizing tendency to apply the term “comics” to graphic novels, but, as it always happens with generalizations of all kinds, the results fall short of identifying the specifics of the genre and ultimately the striking elements that distinguish it from comics on the one hand and from other similar graphic art forms, that also involve a narrative element. In addition, as part of popular culture, comics are appropriated as short cartoon-like series, created for the entertainment of children and teenagers, not intended for adult audiences. Zanettin (2018) shows that graphic novels, though at times erroneously identified as comics, fall into a different form of graphic narrative, even though both comics and graphic novels share the same iconic language. The language that both graphic novels and comics share is based on a set of culturally accepted semiotic conventions, such as representing a sequence of images which follow an internal logic based on the way in which the panels are distributed on each page.

What ultimately differentiates graphic novels from comics is the fact that graphic novels take the form of longer, more complex series, developed in a book, with more complex plot twists, not only designed for children or teenagers, but also for adult readership. However, since it has been established that both comics and graphic novels have, to a certain extent, some common roots, especially when it comes to visual representation/ as far as visual representation is concerned, it is easily understandable why such a literary genre would also appeal to younger readers.

Graphic novels that are addressed to children make use of the cultural grip that comics had and continue to have over generations of young readers and present

the novel in a newer, more appealing form for them. East (2007) shows that young children respond to images and identify themselves with the images in books. Children connect with books and reading by identifying with the visual representations. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why, building through the cultural impact of comics, graphic novels are an attractive literary genre for children as well.

TRANSLATING GRAPHIC NOVELS QUESTS AND CHALLENGES

Translating graphic novels, especially when they are addressed to a younger readership, raises a few issues such as: the way in which translation transfers meaning and context from the source text to the new culture, specific cultural markers that, at times, have no equivalent in the target culture, proper and descriptive names and the problematics they raise and, lastly, create an appropriate narrative voice. For a practical interplay, examples from translating a series of children's graphic novels, from Norwegian into Romanian will be used to balance the theoretical input. The series referenced are Malin Falch's *Northern Lights* series, a graphic novel comprising 4 volumes so far, telling the story of Sonja, a schoolgirl who ends up travelling to a different version of the real world, where she embarks on several exciting adventures. The series has the typical features of a common graphic novel, featuring comic strip-like text, illustrative panels for the graphic part of the story, a narrative line that can be followed along all volumes, the very apparent and intense use of interjections, both as sensory elements and visual details (when part of the visual representations of the stories).

TRANSFERRING AND MAINTAINING CULTURAL MEANING

Eco (2001) points out that equivalence in meaning alone cannot be considered a satisfactory criterion for the creation of a good translation. This is especially valid for literary translations of any kind, but stands true for graphic novels as well, even if the textual input of a graphic novel is not as massive or as generous as in other more elaborate works of fiction, such as short stories or novels. This particular feature of graphic novels, which they share with the comic strip, constitutes perhaps a first challenge in translating the genre. Having very little textual input, can at times, present a challenge for a translator. The difficulty occurs particularly in those situations when it is impossible to offer a perfect equivalent in the target language for what is expressed in the source text. This is very often valid for elements in the source language that carry a strong cultural meaning, for which there is no correspondent in the target language or culture.

For instance, in Malin Falch's *Northern Lights* series of graphic novels for children, we can refer to the word *hulder*, which names a forest creature found in Scandinavian folklore and for which there is no equivalent in Romanian. English preserves the name *hulder*, but also accepts the more Norwegian/Scandinavian word *huldra* to refer to this mystical figure, that is so specific to Scandinavian culture. The problematic arising from the term remains in Romanian as well and is double-fold in nature. On the one hand, there is the already mentioned issue of not having a Romanian equivalent of any sort for *hulder*. On the other hand, not having an equivalent in the target language, automatically implies a greater difficulty to transfer cultural meaning to the translation. The equivalence issue was resolved by making a choice to preserve the Norwegian word *huldra* (occasionally alternating for a more Romanian form *huldră*) in order to make the character more relatable to its young readers. The cultural dilemma remains, because the cultural significance that the term *huldra* can convey in a language in which such a creature does not exist, is minimal. Of course, Romanian folklore is filled with relatively similar mystical beings, see: *sânziene*, *iele*, *zâne* (both good and evil), etc., so the readers might either assimilate *huldra* as yet another similar, possibly, magical creature or simply accept it as being a mystical element, completely foreign to anything they have previously encountered, which is specific to this story and the fairyland of Norway and or Scandinavia. The cultural debacle is alleviated to some extent as Falch offers a bit more information on the nature of this creature later on in volume 4, when Espen tells Sonja that *hulders* can only be women and they can only change their form to impersonate other women.

Moreover, an additional complication occurs when a masculine form of *huldra* is brought into the mix when Sonja attempts to ascertain what kind of creature Espen is. It has already been established that *hulders* can only be female creatures, but when Sonja unwittingly inquires "*er du en hulder?*" (Falch, 2021, p. 52) meaning "*are you a hulder?/tu ești o huldră?*", this creates an additional linguistic conundrum. To begin with, the word *huldra* can only be used for the female variant of the mystical forest creature pertaining to Scandinavian folklore. A male *hulder* is referred to as *huldrekall*. The fact that Falch chooses to add this element of ingenuity to Sonja's character, helps with the cultural meaning of *hulder*. Firstly, it creates the opportunity for a clarification. This is how the readership finds out that *hulders* can only be female. Secondly, Falch chooses not to complicate things further (at least culturally speaking) and doesn't mention *huldrekall* as being the male counterpart of a *huldra*, hence Sonja's question, very innocent and slightly unsuspecting in nature.

However, taking into account everything that has been presented so far, how does one translate “*er du en hulder?*” (Falch, 2021, p. 52) into Romanian? Since Falch does not use the term *huldrekall* as part of her text, it would make a far too great endeavor to create an adaptation or normalization, on the part of the translator to bring it to life in the target text. At the same time, just like there is no equivalent for *huldra* in Romanian, there is no equivalent for its masculine counterpart. Considering the nature of the text, its target readership and the very auspicious context created by Falch, with Sonja’s simple question (knowing that male huldres are not referred to as *hulder*, as Sonja references them, but rather *huldrekall*), the translation would need to follow the lead of the source text and create a similar question in Romanian, which reads: “*tu ești o huldră?*”. The fact that there is no equivalent for *huldră* in Romanian, nor is there one in Norwegian for that matter, plays into the innocent nature of the question and it creates a context that is very relatable for the young readers at the other end of the line. This translation strategy fits quite well with what Eco (2001) suggests about translation not being only connected with linguistic competence, but also involving intertextual, psychological, and narrative competencies. In this respect, creating a word such as *huldră*, which doesn’t exist in Romanian, fits the purposes of the source text, of the translation in itself, resolves, to a certain extent, the transfer of cultural meaning and functions well with the intended readership.

It is quite understandable that names which depict mythological creatures belonging strictly to Norse mythology or Scandinavian folklore should, to a certain extent, be granted a similar status to proper names, despite the fact that they do not possess all the distinctive features that proper names do (Urian, 2020). This allows for the cultural transfer of meaning to be ensured to a far greater extent. The attempt to resort to a radical naturalization of such terms, for instance, to use a similar creature from the Romanian folklore instead of *huldra* (see *zână*), constitutes a far too aggressive alteration of the source text, hindering the cultural transfer of meaning from source, to target.

A similar situation is created by yet another set of mystical creatures which appear in Falch’s graphic novel, namely *rotnisser*. In addition to the issues related to the transfer of cultural meaning that have already been discussed in connection with *huldra*, *rotnisser* poses additional difficulties in translation. The most notable one to mention is the fact that while for *huldra* a naturalization of the term was possible and fit naturally with the target language, for *rotnisser* such an approach is not applicable. When naturalization is not possible, the translator must aim to recreate a similarity in meaning for the term under discussion by interpretation.

Still, substituting an expression with interpretants automatically means that the substituting expressions are never the perfect equivalents of the expression in the source language (Eco, 2011). So, then, how are translations of terms such as *rotnisser* possible? How is meaning created in a language where such concepts don't exist? While there are no perfect or idealistic answers to these two questions, it is safe to argue that translation is, after all, a reinterpretation of the source text as much as it is a word-for-word rendition of its content. In fact, translations are not so much concerned with producing a perfect transfer from language A, to language B (Eco, 2011), as they are with producing a reinterpretation of the source texts so that they can be accepted as natural linguistic renditions of the target language and culture.

Returning to the issues raised by *rotnisser*, and accepting that naturalization is impossible in this situation, the only option that remains available is to create an equivalent in the target language. Creating the equivalent is an act of interpretation on the part of the translator. In this particular case, an interpretation is based on what such a creature represents in Norse mythology. The *nisse* was imagined as an elderly, male creature of small dimensions, with a full beard, magical powers and a somewhat shifting temperament. The readers of Nordic literature will probably be able to draw some cultural meaning related to the term from Selma Lagerlöf's world-renowned children's book *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*, where a similar *nisse* casts a spell on the main character to punish him for his terrible behavior towards his parents and farm animals. With Malin Falch, it is clear that we are dealing with a subcategory of the *nisse*, identified as the *rotnisse*, only referred to in the plural (so as part of a pack, never individually), which are encountered in the kingdom of the trolls and which are graphically represented as small, obscure creatures, with moss-covered faces and ghastly eyes, coming out at night from under rocks and boulders, to feast on leftover sustenance. Additional meaning is created for these creatures by the general disgust expressed by several of the characters in reference to them, see: "*Rotnisser! Æsj, jeg hater dem!*" (2021: 53) "*Rotnisser! Yuk, I hate them!*" or "*Jeg tipper han ble spist av rotnisser.*" (2020: 57) "*I bet he was eaten by rotnisser.*" In the latter example, it is understood that *rotnisser* are disgusting enough to feast on dying or wounded people or animals.

Clearly, there are quite a couple of features of the *rotnisser* to be considered in translation. The English translation opted for *root goblins* (2020: 57). Lexically speaking, *rotnisse* is a compound word, made up of *rot* meaning *root* and of course *nisse*. As it appears, the English translation preserved the word-for-word rendition of *root* and identified *nisse* with a *goblin*. As an equivalent for *nisse*, the goblin identifies well with American/English literature and culture, as a creature that is

readily relatable, particularly for children of younger ages, from their cultural appropriation of the fairytale universe. The Merriam Webster dictionary defines *goblin* as being “an ugly or grotesque sprite that is usually mischievous and sometimes evil and malicious”. This description fits very well with the graphic representation Falch offers for her *rotnisser*, so at least in this respect, the graphic representations, so intrinsic for a graphic novel, can function as a well-received aid for the translation process.

When it comes to the Romanian translation, the quest lies in attempting to unify cultural significance, preserve the sense of loyalty to the source text and to convey equally significant meaning to the target readership. Based on what the concept of *nisse* signifies in Norse mythology, the closest mystical creature with relatable significance for Romanian readers is *spiriduș*. In this situation, the translator opted for an adaptation of the original concept *nisse*, for which there is no perfect equivalent in Romanian and for which naturalization is not possible. The choice for *spiriduș* is based on what this mystical creature represents in Romanian mythology. Thus, a *spiriduș* might be defined as a demon or an enchanted creature, often associated or even identified with a demon or the devil himself, possessing great magical powers and a predisposition to mischief (Ghinoiu, 2013). Its presence is generally associated with maleficent forces and Romanian folklore sees it as ominous. Abiding by this description, *spiriduș* and *nisse*, possess similar features and signify almost equivalent meanings culturally.

Still, there is one more element to consider. The creatures that Falch mentions in her graphic novel are *rotnisser*, as such, there is additional information to be conveyed in the translation. As evidenced before, *rot* means *root*, and while the English translation easily resorts to *root goblins* to reference *rotnisser*, the same solution cannot be valid in Romanian. The Germanic nature of the English language makes it more similar syntactically to Norwegian, which is one of the most poignant reasons why *root goblin* also makes syntactic sense in translation. Romanian does not modify this way, so it is necessary to insert a descriptive piece of information, in order to clarify the nature of these mystical creatures for Romanian readers. This is why the Romanian translation opts for *spiriduși rozători*, assigning a rodent-like dimension to the characters, based on the graphic representation given by Falch’s drawing and on their nature, as it appears depicted above.

Transferring cultural meaning through translation remains a quest for graphic novels as it is for any other complex fictional genres. Nonetheless, considering the nature of such a genre, it seems appropriate to highlight that the graphic representation of the characters, entities or elements that cannot transfer enough cultural significance to the target language, provides additional information as to

their significance. This makes it easier for these notions to both be translated or adapted for the target language/culture and to keep more of their cultural significance for the readers on the other end.

PROPER AND DESCRIPTIVE NAMES

Proper and descriptive names are generally not problematic for adult fiction, since they are commonly not translated and left as they are. With children's literature things are a bit different, translators and editors alike choosing adaptations of foreign names, when considered appropriate. This poses an interesting problematic also for graphic novels, especially since names are a powerful signal of social and cultural context (Lathey, 2016). Readily deciding to translate, modify or adapt proper names needs to be considered very carefully, as it can tamper with the cultural significance of the fictional work, it can create a shift in the identity of the characters and altogether alter the original text to a far greater extent than needed. Still, there are certain situations when translating proper names of children's literature, in particular, proves to be necessary. In such situations, the names of the characters have a descriptive feature without the translation of which, their identity would be incomplete in the target language. Lathey (2016) offers the example of Astrid Lindgren's *Pipi Långstrump*, whose last name is translated to most languages as it is part of the character's physical appearance. Pipi evokes the image of a tall, gangly girl, wearing the iconic long stockings. It is undoubtedly essential that this semantic content be carried over to any foreign language or culture which receives a translation of this book. This is why in English we have *Pipi Longstocking* or *Pipi Langstrømpe* in Norwegian or *Pippi Calzaslargas* in Spanish or *Pipi Șosețica* in Romanian etc.

In Falch's graphic novels, proper names fall into two categories: proper names that are treated as such, without being translated and proper names for which it is necessary to offer a translation in the target language, or for the purpose of this paper, quasi-proper names. The explanation for this division is quite simple. Those proper names which refer to people (see Sonja, uncle Henrik), characters that maintain a variety of human features, but are not wholly human or possess magical powers (see Espen, Lotta, Trym, Jerv, Hjalmar, Ravdna, etc.) are considered names proper and are granted this status in the translation as well, namely they are left as they appear in the source text. The quasi-proper names, referring to animals, smaller creatures belonging to the mysterious new world Sonja travels to (see Bjørnar, Gnist, etc.) are of a different nature. Their names are descriptive attributes,

created not only to identify them throughout the novels, but also to specifically indicate a feature or a special purpose they might serve (similar to the treatment of *Pipi Longstocking* mentioned above). As such, this last category of proper names, which we can identify as descriptive proper names, requires translation. For instance, *Bjørnar*, which is formed from the Norwegian word *bjørn* meaning *bear*, appears in the Romanian text as *Ursu'*. The other example *Gnist*, which in Norwegian means *spark*, appears in the Romanian text as *Scânteie*.

The two examples are also different, even though for the purpose of this paper, they are placed in the same category. In the case of *Bjørnar*, the suffix *ar*, added to the common noun *bjørn* has no semantic significance taken individually, therefore, an option for translating would be to ignore the meaning of the root noun and treat it as a fully proper name. In the English translation of Falch's novels, the translator makes a similar choice and opts for *Bjornar* as the name of Sonja's bear friend, performing just a small adaptation for the English language, by dropping the Norwegian *ø* from the original name. Yet, with *Gnist*, the English translation shifts strategy and offers an English equivalent for the name, *Sparky*. The choice for the diminutive is most likely based on the graphic representation of this tiny, dragon-like creature (it spits small flames), which also appears to be friendly and pet-like. The Romanian translation offers the most meaningful equivalent for *Gnist*, namely *Scânteie*.

In cases such as these, the translator has a freedom of choice, to either treat these words as proper names or to offer the best equivalent for the target language. We have already mentioned in this paper that interpretation is an important component of translation (see Eco, 2001) and in the case of graphic novels, these interpretations can also be made based on the visual elements offered in the graphic representations of the characters. These visuals also need to be considered as part of the narrative, especially since they offer just the right amount of subtext needed for the readers to get a wholesome picture of the fictional universe they create.

The scarcity of textual information, so specific for the design of the graphic novel, makes it a necessity for certain pieces of information to be revealed in the panels. There is semantic content in the graphic representation of the characters which, in the majority of cases, has to be carried over to the new language. Not doing so, would deprive the readership of essential information related to the new culture, the characters and the unfolding of the whole narrative line.

CREATING AND CONVEYING NARRATIVE VOICE

Yet another issue that lies at the core of translation studies is represented by the great challenge of perfectly creating or perhaps re-creating and conveying a narrative voice to the target language. It is always a quest of finding measure and rhythm, deciding to offer more to the target text or preserve the original content as much as possible. Eco (2001) suggests that a translation which enriches the target language by offering more information than the original text is not necessarily a good translation, but rather a separate work of art in itself. When discussing rhythm, the same theoretician argues that a good translation would have to generate the same effect aimed at by the original, nothing more, nothing less. Thus, we can conclude that, when it comes to the narrative voice, a perfect equilibrium needs to be attained between translator interference and what is actually offered in the original work.

Carrying this argument to the graphic novel genre, especially the graphic novel which is meant for children, involves the consideration of a few more aspects such as: understanding how the narrative voice functions in a graphic genre, preserving the verbal features of the character voices, preserving the semantic content as faithfully as possible, while conveying cultural meaning to the target text. While not specifically referring to graphic novels, Oittinen (2000) supports an argument which can be legitimate for graphic novels as well. She argues that, in the case of children's literature, the verbal and the visual are both part of a greater whole, going even further to state that:

"The words and pictures in a book are never just what they seem, but are perceived as this or that kind of words and pictures in a special situation influenced by an infinity of factors. (...) Illustration is a part of the set of conditions, a part of the dialogic interaction and must not be excluded from the translating of illustrated texts" (2000, p. 100)

Such an approach fits well with the genre of the graphic novel. Even as previously evidenced in this paper (see semantic content related to proper names or cultural elements) illustrations are essential mediums of narrative conveyance, as the narrative voice flows through the panels, which contain most of the graphic content. Novels generally offer a great expression of the narrative voice, either directly or through the voice of a designated character or several characters in more complex works of fiction. The lifeline of the graphic genre is the dialogue, with very little opportunity for textual detailing of landscape or character description. The latter details are all achieved through graphic representations, which are bearers of

semantic content, narrative voice proper, function as mood setters. Therefore, all descriptive propensities, which a novel would normally achieve through descriptive passages, are successfully expressed through imagery in the graphic genre.

Take for instance the panels below, which are taken from Malin Falch's third book *Kråkesøstrene*, (*The Crow Sisters*).

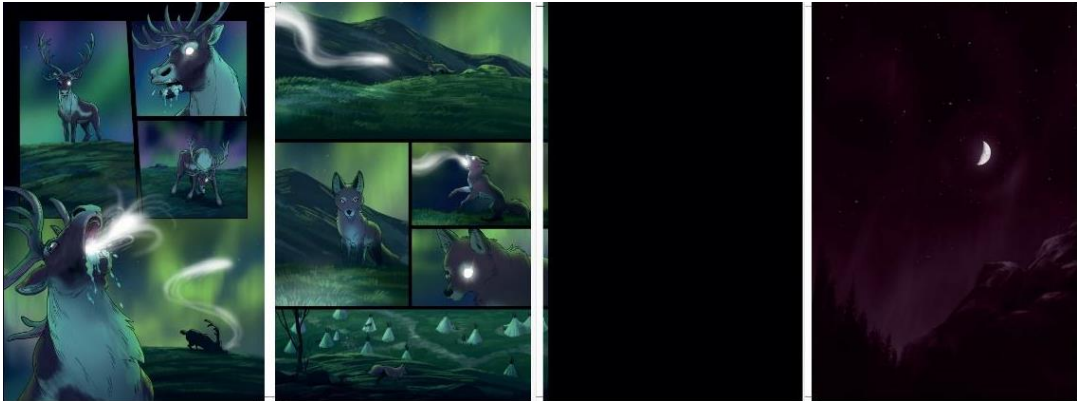


Figure 1. Malin Falch, *Kråkesøstrene* (*The Crow Sisters*)

The panels in Figure 1 belong to the first chapter of the book and are presented after Sonja and Lotta's arrival to the village of the Mountain People. These particular panels are a very good example of how much semantic content graphic elements carry. The first panel is formed of a collage of four images, which indicates that the action unfolds at a brisk pace, inducing a fast dynamic. The stag first appears in the distance, with one bright eye. Then we have a close-up focusing on the bright eye and highlighting an additional detail, that foam is forming around the stag's mouth. The fourth image in the collage shows the stag displaying erratic behavior. Finally, the main image in the panel shows a close-up of the stag with foam and a bright light coming out of its mouth, while in the more distant background, the stag appears to be stumbling to the ground, head down, while a stream of light leaves its body.

The next panel shows the same stream of light travelling across the landscape, only to enter the body of a fox, whose eye lights up, just like the stag's did, in the previous panel. The last image in the panel, shows the teepees in the Mountain People's village, seen from afar, in the dead of the night, enveloped in nighttime serenity. The same feeling is perpetuated in the last two panels, one showing complete darkness, while one displays clear skies in a classic violet night-like hue, adorned with stars, and the moon in the waxing crescent phase.

The semantic content included in the panels presented without textual input is extremely rich and it's an element which adds complexity to the narrative dimension of graphic novels. Discussing the graphic novel version of Margaret Atwood's famous work *The Handmaid's Tale*, Michelle Gadpaille (2022) also notices that graphic novels introduce narrative techniques such as flashback, foreshadowing, foregrounding, juxtaposition, visual metaphors. The same techniques apply throughout Falch's novels as well, especially in those panels in which no textual information is offered (Figure 1). In the sample panels offered above, we can see clear examples of juxtaposition (the collage of four images in the first panel), foregrounding (the first panel's main image and close-up on the beaming stag), foreshadowing (the bright light travelling from animal to animal after which the serene scene of the teepees in the village is presented). The perspective also changes from panel to panel. It is clearly noticeable that, at the ground level, the action moves at a brisker pace when the stream of light travels from animal to animal. Then there is a swift change of perspective, offering a bird's eye view of the teepees, as the light vanishes and serenity once again takes over the land. All of these elements are there to add to the story, to build up a full narrative line that even relatively inexperienced readers can respond and relate to.

In addition to the artistry of the panels which contribute immensely to the creation of the narrative voice, there is another essential element which needs to be discussed: the importance of onomatopoeia for the graphic genre. According to Lasserre (2018), onomatopoeia adds color to the way we express ourselves, functioning as a communication tool that often seems arbitrary and there aren't always specific rules when it comes to how they are formed, especially across different languages and cultures. Onomatopoeia conveys more of the narrative voice in graphic novels. At times onomatopoeia can simply be a representation of a sound: *splash* (the sound made when falling in water), *boom* (the sound of something exploding), *woof* (the sound of a dog barking) etc. At other times, their meaning can be more complex, when they express rather than describe mental states or feelings (see *wow*, *yuk*) Lasserre (2018).

Onomatopoeia, though an element of reduced proportions, can be quite problematic in translation. It is safe to assert that comics and graphic novels have almost created a culture of onomatopoeia, which presents an interesting situation for translation scenarios as well. Lasserre (2018) offers as examples words like *kapow*, *thunk*, *whamm*, *zgruppp* and *zzzzwap*, which appear in the Batman comics and which are now collectively identified as *Bat-fight words*. This would indicate that onomatopoeia needs to be understood in the context of the comic or graphic novel

they belong to, in order to be properly translated. Then, there is the problem of certain onomatopoeic sounds which don't have a specific correspondent in the target language and onomatopoeia that belong to a culturally common register (mostly in English) and are preferred over possible equivalents that exist in the target language (possible examples *wow*, *oops*).

As it appears, a translator is faced with different contexts and choices and the decision on how to proceed most appropriately needs to be taken based on the nature of the story and on the inherent culture of the target readers. What is meant by the inherent culture of the target readers, refers to the fact that readers of comic books and graphic novels are generally a community of readers, "the group-in-the-know" (Lasserre, 2018). They share a certain familiarity with the comic-book universe, they are also familiar with the classic set of onomatopoeia that make the comic book and graphic novel worlds so expressive.

Falch's use of onomatopoeia is varied. She uses this linguistic form of artistry copiously, with great common sense and artistic intuition, whenever the narrative line seems to require it. We encounter classic examples, that are easily recognizable and easy to render across various languages such as *PLASK* (2020, p.7) – the sound made by something falling in the water (*splash* in English or *pleosc* in Romanian) or *AAAH* (2020, p.17) – for when someone is shocked or in pain (which can be rendered as is both in English and in Romanian). However, we also encounter more specific types of onomatopoeia, like the sounds made by giant trolls. They raise the question of how might a giant troll sound to a Romanian or English reader, when trolls don't exist in either culture? In such situations, it's best to preserve the original sound created by the author. It's bound to convey the most meaning for the reader, who has no other point of reference for a troll and how it may look, behave or sound.

Nevertheless, not all troll-related onomatopoeia seems to fall in the same category. When one of the giant trolls awakes from its slumber and walks away, Falch uses *DUNK DUNK DUNK* (2020, p.24) as the sound made by his giant footsteps, a sound which is not solely troll-specific. The sound can also be interpreted as the sound of a giant walking away, and giants are beings which are universally part of the global universe of fairytales. This is why *DUNK DUNK DUNK* becomes *THUMP, THUMP, THUMP* (2020, p.24) in the English translation.

Other examples of onomatopoeia from the graphic novel series that can't be translated are *the shooms* and *the fvooms*. They are generally part of intense fight scenes or scenes that involve the use of magic forces. They are meant to express the strength, voracity, fierceness of the events and are generally plastered across entire

panels, including little to no text and some images of characters gesturing and displaying expressive body language.

The narrative voice is powerfully but discretely represented in the graphic genre. The artistry of the panels offers sufficient information to fill out the descriptive gaps which cannot be textually rendered due to the comic strip format the graphic novel adheres to. In the rendition of narrative voice, translation has a pivotal role in relaying cultural specificity (see onomatopoeia), ensuring a seamless transfer of meaning while adjusting the textual significance to the level of understanding of the readership. This is how “wonderlands” are created.

CONCLUSIONS

Graphic novels propose a fictional genre which is relatively new and at times poorly understood, both as a fictional form and in terms of its utility. Despite this reductionist perspective, the graphic novel is becoming more and more popular, especially for younger readers. This also applies to those cultures which don't have a strong comic book background.

The translation of graphic novels raises issues that are significant such as: transferring meaning and culture, addressing specific cultural markers, preserving but at the same time re-creating the narrative voice, maintaining consistency with the visual information which bears its own semantic content. More radical translation strategies such as naturalization, adaptation, compensation should be used with measure, always in line with what the source text offers. The artistry of the panels, where visual representations are offered, presents a wealth of information for translators, especially when dealing with words, concepts, sounds (very important for the graphic genre) which don't have equivalents in the target language.

Children should be understood as a readership that needs wonderlands in order to thrive and develop. Previous generations of young readers have been shaped by *Alice in Wonderland*. Graphic novels are the new wonderlands for the new generation of modern readers, multicultural, tech-savvy, dynamic.

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Erori și greșeli în utilizarea limbii române de către vorbitorii maghiari

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Rezumat: În acest studiu ne propunem să evidențiem erorile lexico-semantică și morfo-sintactice care apar în limba română în discursurile studenților maghiari. Este cunoscut faptul că diferențele dintre cele două limbi, română și maghiară, pot genera erori care se observă atât de frecvent, încât pot fi considerate erori tipice. Construim un corpus pe baza unor teste redactate de studenți maghiari. Selectăm greșelile și le clasificăm în următoarele două subtipuri: erori lexico-semantică (alegerea greșită a cuvintelor etc.) și erori morfo-sintactice (erori de acord, declinarea substantivelor, conjugarea verbelor etc.). Construirea unui tipar de greșeli tipice poate facilita elaborarea unor manual și sau materiale didactice auxiliare menite să reducă fenomenul abaterii de la normă.

Cuvinte cheie: *limba română, studenți alolingvi, limba maternă maghiară, greșeală*

INTRODUCERE

În acest studiu ne propunem să evidențiem erorile lexico-semantică și morfo-sintactice care apar în discursurile în limba română ale studenților maghiari. Definim conceptul de *corectitudine lingvistică* drept forma lingvistică ce este conformă regulilor de utilizare a limbii în varianta ei standard: „un concept folosit în gramatica normativă pentru a caracteriza orice enunț care respectă cerințe în plan gramatical, semantic, pragmatic, stilistic și situational” (Mangu, 2017, p. 1). *Greșeala, abaterea*, în schimb, reprezintă încălcarea, nerespectarea acestor reguli (Mangu, 2017, p. 1). Normele limbii literare oferă fundamentarea cea mai sigură în delimitarea dintre forma corectă și cea greșită, incorectă sau abaterea de la normă, din acest motiv în analiza noastră facem referire la câteva din lucrările normative ce au în vedere limba literară, limba standard sau norma. Norma lingvistică este așadar acel „sistem de reguli care privește, din mai multe puncte de vedere, uzajul unei limbi

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date, norma literară [fiind] expresie convențională, la nivelul limbii literare, a unui anumit uzaj lingvistic dominant” (<https://dexonline.ro/definitie/norm%>).

Valeria Guțu-Romalo (1961) abordează relația dintre conceptele de *greșeală* și *abatere*, ambele concepte fiind o îndepărtare de la normă, de la regulă. Abaterea este subordonată greșelii, în sensul că noțiunea de greșeală de limbă are o sferă mult mai largă. Trăsătura comună abaterii și greșelii o constituie îndepărtarea de la o normă și numai după natura acestei încălcări putem decide dacă e vorba despre o greșeală sau despre o abatere.

În lexic apar mai multe abateri decât în sintaxă ori în morfologie, după Gherman (2019), iar în morfologie, abaterile și greșelile sunt mai frecvente decât în sintaxă. Aceeași autoare oferă exemple de abatere de la normă: trecerea verbelor de la o conjugare la alta, formele paralele ale diferitelor timpuri și moduri, cuvintele formate greșit, împrumuturile de cuvinte din alte limbi, utilizarea unor forme din alte sisteme lexicale sau din alte registre. Ca exemple de greșeli Gherman (2019) menționează: desconsiderarea regulii privind acordul între subiect și predicat, dezacord între substantiv și atributul său participial, între *al*, *a*, *ai*, *ale* și pronumele adjectival posesiv – *meu*, *mea*, utilizarea nepotrivită a pronumelor, dezacordurile gramaticale. După Camen (2022, p. 297) „greșeala de limbă poate fi determinată de cunoașterea insuficientă a unei limbi, de comoditatea vorbitorilor sau de analogie”. În opinia cercetătoarei abaterea este supraordonată greșelii, căci „formarea limbii literare (caracterizată tocmai prin rigoarea normelor sale) extinde, [...] sfera conceptului de abatere, care, pe lângă greșelile propriu-zise, ajunge să cuprindă nerespectarea, [...], normelor proprii acestui aspect al limbii” (Gamen 2022, p. 300).

Ea dă drept exemplu de abatere folosirea variantelor regionale, populare în locul formelor literare, utilizarea elementelor de jargon și argou acolo unde ele nu ar trebui utilizate, încălcarea normelor prin introducerea elementelor familiare, colocviale. Printre greșeli, ea inventariază lipsa acordului dintre subiect și predicat și conjugările deviate. Carmen Gamen aduce în discuție o altă diviziune a abaterilor și/sau greșelilor, și anume abaterile *care se impun*, care duc la schimbarea limbii prin schimbarea normei și abaterile *care nu se impun*: „pentru abaterile care s-au impus, deci au fost un element de evoluție a limbii, se utilizează termenul de inovații, lipsit de nuanța depreciativă din greșeală sau abatere.” (Gamen 2022, p. 301)

LIMBA ROMÂNĂ ȘI LIMBA MAGHIARĂ ÎN CONTACT

Limba română și limba maghiară sunt două limbi diferite ca structură și sistem morfo-sintactic, însă sunt limbi care coabitează în spațiul geografic al

Transilvaniei, prin urmare este de notat un întreg mecanism de influențe reciproce între cele două limbi, manifestate prin împrumuturi, calcuri sau fenomene de interferență și transfer. Interferența reprezintă transferul negativ al cunoștințelor, al structurilor, al deprinderilor fixate în limba maternă, în timp ce schimbările neutre sau pozitive sunt numite fenomene de transfer (Tódor, 2020, p. 93). Contactul dintre limbi (prin coabitare dar și prin învățare), vecinătatea sau proximitatea limbilor duc la două tipuri de fenomene de contact, la interferențe și la transferuri. În cazul contactelor dintre limba română și limba maghiară avem de-a face cu aceste fenomene atât din cauza vecinătății limbilor cât și datorită învățării limbii române în sistemul educațional.

Cele două limbi au, în ansamblu, aceleași părți de vorbire: substantivul, articolul, adjectivul, pronumele, numeralul, verbul, adverbul, interjecția și conjuncția sunt prezente în sistemele morfologice ale celor două idiomuri. Limba română dispune de un sistem complex de prepoziții care nu există în limba maghiară, relațiile exprimate prin prepoziții fiind exprimate, în limba maghiară, prin sufixe sudate substantivelor sau pronumelor. Locul prepozițiilor din limba română este jucat de postpoziții aglutinante: *Vin la tine/ Jövök hozzád*. Statutul infinitivului și al participiului diferă în cele două limbi, în limba maghiară ele fiind substantive (*főnévi igenév*) sau adjective (*melléknévi igenév*), iar în limba română ele sunt moduri verbale nepersonale. În limba maghiară notăm prezența a trei categorii morfologice care lipsesc din sistemul morfologic al limbii române: *igekötő* (prefix verbal), *módosítószó* (cuvânt modifier), *névutó* (postpoziție).

FENOMENELE PASIBILE DE INTERFERENȚĂ ÎN RELAȚIA LINGVISTICĂ ROMÂNNO-MAGHIARĂ

1. Genul substantivelor

Categoria gramaticală a genului nu există în limba maghiară. În limba română avem de-a face cu un sistem de trei genuri gramaticale: masculin, feminin și neutru. „Genul este inerent, deci fix, ceea ce înseamnă că substantivul nu trece de la un gen la altul” (Pană Dindelegan, 2016, p. 50). Cea mai dificilă parte a genului pentru vorbitorii maghiari este recunoașterea genului gramatical în cazul în care reprezentarea este diferită de schema: masculin = ființe de sex masculin, feminin = ființe de sex feminin, neutru = nume de lucruri. Există un număr de substantive terminate în *-a*, *-ă* care nu sunt de genul feminin (*un papă, un tată*), sau substantive terminate în *-e* care nu sunt de genul feminin (*un munte, un nume*). Algoritmul de recunoaștere a genului este de obicei distribuția numeralelor: *un-doi* pentru

masculin, *o-două* pentru feminin, *un-două* pentru genul neutru (Hazy, 1999, p. 43). Nerecunoașterea genului va duce la greșeli sau abateri de tipul *o tată**, *o munte**.

2. Numărul substantivelor

Numărul este o categorie care prezintă foarte multe asemănări în cele două limbi:

- existența celor două forme de singular și plural la ambele limbi, prezența unor afixe, desinențe specifice pentru plural (*-e*, *-i*, *-uri* în cazul limbii române, respectiv *-k* în cazul limbii maghiare: *fată-fete/lány-lányok*, *câine, câini/kutya-kutyák*, *gard-garduri/kerítés-kerítések*);
- există substantive defective de plural în ambele limbi;
- există substantive colective în ambele limbi;
- există forme de plural poetic în ambele limbi.

Diferența fundamentală în ceea ce privește numărul este forma de plural a substantivelor de la doi în sus: *o carte/două cărți* unde limba maghiară propune utilizarea formei de singular: *egy könyv/két könyv*. Preferința pentru singular a limbii maghiare se regăsește și la numele care se referă la obiecte pereche (*ochelari/szemüveg*, *pantaloni/nadrág*) sau la contexte care se referă la mai multe obiecte de același fel (*cartofi/krumpli*, *burgonya*, *mere/alma*, *pere/körte*, *lemn/fa*): *Am ochelari noi/Új szemüvegem van*, sau *Am niște mere grozave/Nagyszerű almám van*. Substantivelor *pluralia tantum* în limba română le corespund forme de *singularia tantum* în limba maghiară: *rufe/ruha*, *fehérnemű*, *zori/hajnal*, *moaște/ereklye*. Există substantive de *singularia tantum* în limba maghiară care au forme de singular și plural deopotrivă în limba română: *töltött paprika/ ardei umplut, ardei umpluți*.

Aceste diferențe, respectiv obligativitatea acordului în gen, număr și caz în limba română, conduc vorbitorii maghiari la greșeli de utilizare a limbii române: utilizarea formei greșite, lipsa acordului: *csiperkét szedtem/am cules ciupercă**, *új nadrágom van/am pantalon nou*, noi**.

3. Articolul hotărât, nehotărât, posesiv și demonstrativ.

În limba română articolul hotărât are forme particulare după gen, număr și caz și se adaugă la substantiv: *omul, cartea*. În limba maghiară articolul hotărât are doar formă de singular, nu se declină și este întotdeauna proclitic, așezat înaintea substantivului: *a/az (ember)*. Abaterea tipică de la normă în cazul vorbitorilor maghiari este concretizată prin nerecunoașterea genului gramatical și utilizarea articolului nepotrivit, mai ales la plural: *oamenurile**.

Articolul nehotărât în limba română are formele *un* și *o* și este folosit pentru individualizarea unui referent necunoscut sau nedefinit. În limba maghiară există un singur articol nehotărât, întotdeauna proclitic: *egy*. Abaterile pot surveni atunci

când avem de-a face cu nerecunoașterea genului în cadrul declinării: *unui*fete* dar și atunci când limba română utilizează articolul nehotărât iar limba maghiară nu: *A fost un film extraordinar!/Nagyszerű film volt!*

În ceea ce privește articolul posesiv și cel demonstrativ, Hazy (Hazy, 1999, p. 47) observă că articolul posesiv este utilizat când un substantiv în cazul genitiv

are ca regent un substantiv articulat proclitic (*un creion al elevului*), când între regent și subordonatul în genitiv se intercalează un determinant (*caietul curat al elevului*) sau când determinantul în genitiv este antepus regentului (*ai școlii elevi*).

Articolul posesiv *al, a, ai, ale* poate preceda un substantiv ori un substitut al lui, servind ca element formativ în structura numeralului ordinal (Dimitriu 1999, p. 171). G. Gruică (Gruică, 2007, p. 201) afirmă că o dovadă concludentă de stăpânire a limbii române este și acordul corect al articolului posesiv, cele mai multe complicații la acordul acestuia apar când este utilizat un grup nominal: substantiv + substantiv cu prepoziție + substantiv (sau pronume) în genitiv cu articol posesiv.

Cele două articole au particularități deosebite în ceea ce privește limba română, iar inexistența categoriei articolului posesiv sau genitival în limba maghiară va conduce la numeroase abateri de utilizare. Printre aceste abateri Hazy (1999, p. 47) enumeră:

- omiterea articolului posesiv: *caietul curat elevului este....**;
- poziționarea articolului posesiv la dreapta substantivului cu articol hotărât: *Ion Creangă este scriitorul al copiilor**;
- acordul articolului genitival cu numele posesorului și nu cu obiectul posedat: *Notele bune al elevului**;
- neacordarea articolului posesiv nici cu posesorul, nici cu obiectul posedat: *Romanul a fost scris în anii fecunzi a curentului**.

Articolul demonstrativ adjectival este caracteristic limbii române (*cel, cea, cei, cele*), în limba maghiară rolul acestuia fiind jucat de articolul hotărât (*a, az*). Articolul demonstrativ este utilizat „între substantiv și determinantul său adjectival (*elevul cel harnic*), poate însoți un numeral ordinal (*cel de-al treilea*), unul cardinal (*cei doi*) sau un adjectiv substantivat (*cel harnic este lăudat*)” (Hazy 1999, p. 49).

Greșelile intervin mai ales atunci când articolul demonstrativ este la cazurile genitiv sau dativ, prin neglijarea acordului sau prin omisiune.

4. Cazurile substantivului

La nominativ singurele greșeli vizează genul substantivelor. La genitiv și dativ însă abaterile sunt mult mai numeroase. La genitiv articolul genitival este

incorect folosit sau omis, iar articolul hotărât sau nehotărât este neacordat în gen, iar la dativ greșelile sunt legate tot de gen.

5. Pronumele

Categoria pronumelor cunoaște fenomene de interferență mai ales din cauza existenței formelor accentuate și neaccentuate. După Hazy (Hazy, 1999, p. 56) abaterile comise de vorbitorii maghiari constau în următoarele. „a) folosirea formelor accentuate singure, *mie cumpără, pe tine duce*, etc. după modelul din maghiară: *nekem vesz, téged(et)visz*; b) utilizarea formelor accentuate alături de cele neaccentuate când acestea din urmă nu sunt necesare: *școala ne pregătește pe noi pentru viață, mie îmi cumpără pantofi*”.

Fenomenul dublării complementului direct și indirect prin folosirea formelor neaccentuate ale pronumelui personal în dativ și în acuzativ nu există în limba maghiară, din acest motiv o greșeală tipică este aceea de a omite formele atone: *Am multe greutăți dar (le) voi învinge. Am citit cartea (pe) care mi-ai recomandat (-)* (Hazy, 1999, p. 57).

Sensul exprimat prin forma neaccentuată a pronumelui personal (*îl/o iubesc*) în acuzativ este exprimat printr-o desinență verbală în limba maghiară (*szeretem*), printr-o conjugare tranzitivă obiectivă, desinență care exprimă și persoana subiectului (*eu*) și persoana complementului direct (*pe el/ea*). Acest pluralism semantic al desinenței face ca vorbitorii maghiari să nu simtă obligativitatea prezenței pronumelui personal pentru exprimarea persoanei complementului direct și omiterea pronumelui personal: *Cunosc* în loc de *îl cunosc*.

Varietatea mare a formelor pronominale în limba română face ca utilizarea acestora să fie uneori dificilă, mai ales în cazul formelor pronominale inexistente în limba maghiară, cum ar fi pronumele reflexiv în dativ cu care exprimă posesia: *îmi cunosc prietenii* sau valorile reflexivului românesc care sunt redată prin alte mijloace în limba maghiară:

- ideea de reciprocitate: *se iubesc* este redată în maghiară prin *egyik a másikat*, ceea ce poate conduce la calcuri de tipul *iubește unul pe altul**;
- ideea de impersonalitate (*se zice, se difuzează, se comunică*) este redată în limba maghiară prin *azt mondják, azt közlik, azt kommunikálják*, ceea ce poate facilita calcuri de genul *spune aceea că**. (Hazy 1999, p. 58)

Pronumele reflexiv este foarte des omis acolo unde ar trebui să fie folosit (la verbe reflexive, *Eu grăbesc**) și utilizată acolo nu ar trebui să fie folosit: *El se doarme profund**. Unele verbe active în limba maghiară corespund semantic unor verbe reflexive în limba română (*a se juca/játszani*).

Pronumele relativ ține locul unui regent nominal din supraordonată. Greșelile multe care intervin la vorbitorii maghiari se datorează neacordării genului regentului, mai ales la genitiv și dativ: *Oamenii căruia am vorbit**.

Pronumele interogativ poate genera situații de calc, prin traducerea pronumelui maghiar *ki* prin *cine* și a lui *mi* prin *care* sau *ce*, ceea ce face ca *cine* să fie folosit și în contextele unde *care* ar fi mai potrivit. Hazy (Hazy, 1999,

p. 59) explică fenomenul prin perceperea lui *cine* pentru toți referenții însuflețiți și *care*, *ce* pentru toți referenții neînsuflețiți (*Elevii cine sunt harnici, cine dintre voi*, etc.).

Pronumele relativ maghiar *aki* și cel interogativ *ki* corespund în limba română pronumelor interogativ-relative: *cine*, *care*, *ce* după regula:

- *ki*, *aki* = *cine* în propoziții subiective dar *ki*, *aki* = *care*, *ce* în propoziții atributive ce au ca regent nume de ființe: *Cine sapă groapa altuia/Aki másnak vermet ás; Am discutat despre studenții care/Beszélgettünk a hallgatókról, akik...*;
- interogativul *mi* = *ce*, relativul *ami* = *care*, *ce*: *Ce se întâmplă/Mi történik, Caietul care.../A füzet ami...*

6. Verbul prezintă dificultăți în privința conjugării, a diatezelor și a modurilor verbale. Limba maghiară nu cunoaște diateza pasivă și cea reflexivă, verbele la pasiv sau reflexiv fiind exprimate prin construcții de tipul: *Köztudott, hogy, Azt mondják, hogy, Megépítették*. Foarte des, construcțiile în dativ sunt evitate de către vorbitorii maghiari, care utilizează în locul acestora construcții active: *El a fost lăudat devine Pe el l-au lăudat* sub influența construcției maghiare sinonime *Őt megdicsérték*.

În cazul diatezei pasive abaterea cea mai frecventă este omiterea pronumelui reflexiv: *plimbă* în loc de *se plimbă* sau fenomenul de hipercorectitudine al reflexivizării unor construcții nereflexive: *a se dormi* în loc de *a dormi*. Limba maghiară face apel la un singur timp trecut, sistemul de patru forme distincte de trecut în cazul limbii române generând greșeli frecvente în discursurile vorbitorilor maghiari. Evitarea utilizării perfectului simplu și a timpului mai mult ca perfect respectiv necunoașterea valorilor semantice ale imperfectului² duce la utilizarea cu preponderență a perfectului compus.

Cu toate că forma literară a timpului viitor în limba română (*voi merge*) seamănă cu exprimarea viitorului în limba maghiară (*menni fogok, fogok menni*), vorbitorii maghiari preferă formele de viitor perifrastic popular *o să merg, am să merg*.

² Exprimarea unei acțiuni trecute începute dar neterminate și exprimarea unei acțiuni condiționate (Hazy, 1999, p. 66)

În ceea ce privește modurile, Hazy (Hazy, 1999, p. 66) notează confuziile frecvente între indicativ și conjunctiv, datorită faptului că persoanele întâi și a doua, singular și plural sunt identice la cele două moduri: *eu merg/să merg; tu mergi/să mergi; noi mergem/să mergem; voi mergeți/să mergeți*, fenomen care este extins și la formele de persoana a treia, care diferă: *merge/să meargă, merg/ să meargă*. Această extensie produce forme greșite de tipul: *să ajută**, *să cântă**.

Limba maghiară interferează cu producția lingvistică în limba română a vorbitorilor maghiari prin omiterea verbului *a fi* în conjugare (*ő beteg/el bolnav** sau confuzia dintre *a fi* și *a avea*, exprimate în limba maghiară prin *van*).

7. Prefixele verbale sunt extrem de numeroase în limba maghiară, ele sunt sudate cu verbe și exprimă diverse nuanțe semantice (*el-, be-, l-, fel-, ki-*, etc). În limba română aceste aspecte semantice sunt exprimate prin:

- adverbe: *Kínéz az ablakon* / 'Se uită afară pe geam'
- construcții mai complexe: *Átnéz rajta* / 'Îl desconsideră, se comportă ca și când nu ar fi prezent, nu ar exista'; *Átnézek hozzád* / 'trec pe la tine'
- prefixe verbale: *visszatérni* / 'a reveni'.

Existența prefixelor verbale și complexitatea semantică a acestora poate produce pleonasme de tipul: *a reveni înapoi*.

8. Acordul este un mijloc al subordonării intrapropoziționale în limba română, o manifestare a relației sintactice concretizate prin modificările morfologice ale unui lexem subordonat în funcție de alt lexem regent cu care acesta se acordă. După Valeria Guțu Romalo (2008, p. 35), greșelile cele mai frecvente sunt cele de acord. În limba română vorbim de următoarele tipuri de acord:

- acordul dintre subiect și predicat;
- acordul substantivului cu adjectivul, articolul sau alți determinanți (în limba română adjectivul se acordă în gen, număr și caz cu substantivul determinat, articolul posesiv genitival *a, al, ai, ale* se acordă în gen și număr cu obiectul posedat, și nu cu posesorul).

9. Pronumele relativ *care*, cu rol de complement direct, este utilizat frecvent fără prepoziția specifică acestei funcții sintactice și cazului acuzativ *pe*, precum în *mașina care am cumpărat-o**, *copiii care i-am văzut**, *cartea care o citesc** etc.

10. Calcul sintactic este un alt fenomen frecvent care înseamnă copierea fidelă a unor forme din limba maghiară și utilizarea lor ca atare în limba română: *Fáj a fejem./Doare capul meu** (Hazy, 1999, p. 106).

11. Greșelile de topică cele mai frecvente sunt următoarele (cf. Hazy, 1999, p. 106):

- atributul în limba maghiară este întotdeauna antepus, în limba română este postpus: *két könyv/două cărți*, cu excepția atributului adjectival care poate fi atât postpus, cât și antepus : *sok könyv/cărți multe, multe cărți*.

- complementul direct și cel indirect apar în limba română după regent, în limba maghiară apar în fața regentului, dar pot apărea și după regent: *Egy teát készítek; Készítek egy teát /Fac un ceai.*
- când complementul direct și cel indirect sunt exprimate prin substantiv, în limba română după regent este exprimat complementul direct, iar în limba maghiară, prima poziție după regent îi revine complementului indirect: *I-am cumpărat o carte mamei/Vásároltam édesanyámnak egy könyvet.*
- complementele circumstanțiale de mod, de timp, de loc sunt poziționate în limba maghiară înaintea predicatului, normă care nu există în limba română.
- în limba română propoziția predicativă și cea consecutivă stau întotdeauna în dreapta regentei, iar în limba maghiară ordinea este liberă.

ERORI DE LIMBĂ ÎN EXERCIȚII DE COMUNICARE

În acest studiu dorim să investigăm erorile și abaterile de la normă așa cum ele apar în limbajul studenților din anul I de la Universitatea Sapiientia, Facultatea de Științe Tehnice și Umane Târgu-Mureș. Dorim așadar să ne aplecăm asupra stării limbii române în textele scrise de studenți maghiari din anul I, tineri care au absolvit ciclul de 12 clase din sistemul educațional din România, au studiat limba română timp de 12 ani, prin urmare, cel puțin teoretic, se află la un nivel de cunoaștere al limbii române de cel puțin B 2 (conform CECR). Am construit un corpus de exemple de abateri pe care le-am selectat din lucrări date la cursul practic, unde studenții au avut de rezolvat câteva exerciții al căror scop principal a fost comunicarea. Pe parcursul semestrului ei au avut parte de exerciții de comunicare în limba română iar exercițiile din test au fost de următoarele tipuri: portretul unei persoane, dialog pe temă dată și studiată pe parcursul semestrului, exerciții de înțelegere a textului, redactarea unui rezumat, descrierea unui peisaj utilizând cuvinte date, răspuns la întrebări cu scenarii imaginate (cum ar fi?), comentarea de propoziții cu etichete și prejudecăți. Am selectat greșelile și le-am clasificat în următoarele două subtipuri: erori lexico-semantice și erori morfo-sintactice. Scopul acestui demers nu este să facem o cercetare cantitativă privind greșelile de limbă ale vorbitorilor maghiari, ci mai degrabă să facem o analiză calitativă a fenomenelor și tendințelor legate de normă și abatere de la normă la tinerii maghiari, așa cum aceste tendințe și fenomene sunt reperabile în lucrările lor.

ERORI LEXICO-SEMANTICE

În cadrul greșelilor lexico-semantică am identificat următoarele subclase.

Pragmatică și acte de limbaj în comunicare

În această subclasă am inclus acele abateri care denotă necunoașterea unor aspecte semantice și/sau pragmatice de utilizare a limbii, de exemplu întrebări care pot fi puse la un interviu pentru un loc de muncă, expresii folosite în timpul conversațiilor de socializare, erori legate de opțiunea pentru forme neliterare, colocviale. Dacă lexemele din comunicarea orală, cotidiană (*păi, îi, nașpa*) pot fi puse pe seama grupei de vârstă din care studenții fac parte, necunoașterea unor formule lingvistice de politețe sau legate de situații de comunicare formale denotă faptul că studenții nu sunt angajați în situații de comunicare oficiale în limba română, deși la ore s-a abordat tematica serviciului și a căutării unui loc de muncă, deci implicit interviul de angajare. Greșelile din corpus sunt următoarele:

Tabel 1. Greșeli de pragmatică și comunicare (sursa: corpus propriu)

Ocupați locul!
Ce fel de studii ați făcut-o?
Ce fel de limbi folosiți bine?
Pot să vorbesc la limba franceză
Cât este salariu și ce poate numără?
Mașina li arăta dezastru....
Păi îi cam puțin
el știe mai multe limbaje
am dat plătire
cred că deaia dispăre multe meserii
probabil că este frică
Da, ești corect
chiar și aerul era nașpa
din părerea mea

Necunoașterea formulei *Ocupați loc* e dublată de necunoașterea utilizării sau neutilizării articolului hotărât. Necunoașterea formulărilor pragma-lingvistice consacrate este denotat și de *Ce fel de studii ați făcut-o?** sau *Ce fel de limbi folosiți bine?**, în loc de *Ce studii aveți* sau *Ce limbi cunoașteți*. Varianta *Pot să vorbesc la limba franceză** denotă nu doar o insuficientă cunoaștere a acestor întrebări tip, dar și probleme majore în ceea ce privește utilizarea prepozițiilor, ce duc la formulări precum *din părerea mea**. *Cât este salariu** și *ce poate numără** subliniază lipsa competenței comunicative dar și lipsa cunoștințelor legate de utilizarea formelor articulate sau nearticulate sau necunoașterea sensurilor, deoarece, dacă la celelalte

enunțuri se poate deduce sensul, *la ce poate numără** nu înseamnă practic nimic. Amestecarea registrelor respectiv utilizarea unor elemente de jargon caracterizează frazele *Mașina îi arăta dezastru....*, respectiv *Păi îi cam puțin*, chiar și *aerul era nașpa*.

*Cred că deaia dispare multe meserii** conține o greșeală de ortografie dar și dezacordul dintre subiect și predicat. *Probabil că este fricată** și *Da, ești corect** denotă lipsuri în ceea ce privește cunoașterea modalităților de exprimare a unor funcții în limba română, formule de comunicare cotidiene de tipul *Ai dreptate*, dar și calchieri după limba engleză: *she is frightened* (fricată*) și *you are right* (ești corect*).

Cuvinte inventate

Tabel 2. *Lexeme inventate de studenți* (sursa: corpus propriu)

am dat plătire
trăirea la sat
îmbrăcarea faină
străinitatul
prejudecarea nu este adevărată
orașul ar fi foarte poluată, depresantă

În corpusul analizat am identificat un număr nu foarte mare de cuvinte care nu există în limba română. Așa cum ele sunt utilizate de unul dintre subiecți, ele par a fi niște derivate cu ajutorul sufixelor *-rea* și *-at*, pornindu-se de la cuvinte existente. În loc de *am plătit* unul din studenți utilizează un cuvânt inventat: *am dat plătire**, în loc de *traiul* la țară, același subiect inventează forma *trăirea*, lexem care există în limba română, dar în timp ce *trai* înseamnă ‘viață’, *trăirea* se referă la ‘faptul de a trăi’ sau ‘un proces sufletesc, experiență sufletească (trăite cu intensitate)’ (Dexonline). Forma *îmbrăcarea faină** se referă clar la hainele frumoase, la îmbrăcămintea frumoasă. *Îmbrăcare* înseamnă, conform *Dicționarului explicativ al limbii române*, varianta disponibilă online, ‘acțiunea de a (se) îmbrăca și rezultatul ei (antonimul dezbrăcării)’, fie ‘îmbrăcămintea’ (Dexonline), cu toate acestea tendința aceluiași subiect de a altera forma cuvintelor din necunoaștere și utilizarea regionalismului *fain*, ne duce cu gândul la necunoașterea formei ‘haină’, ‘vestimentație’. Substantivul *străinătate* apare sub forma *străinitatul**. Un alt exemplu este *prejudecarea nu este adevărată**, unde *prejudecata* apare în forma coruptă *prejudecarea**. În exemplul *orașul ar fi foarte poluată, depresantă** stricarea formei cuvântului *depresiv*, dublată de o greșeală de acord între substantivul neutru *orașul* și toate adjectivele folosite la forma de feminin în loc de forma de masculin, cerută de *orașul*. *Depresant*, de altfel este un lexem existent în limba română, însemnând

„Reactiv folosit pentru a împiedica flotația unui anumit mineral dintr-un minereu” (Dexonline). Utilizarea acestor forme greșite ale cuvintelor este numită în lingvistică *corruption* sau *bastardisation*, adică stricarea formei cuvintelor în special prin introducerea de elemente discordante sau neobișnuite³.

Calchieri după maghiară

Tabel 3. *Calcuri după limba maternă* (sursa: corpus propriu)

se uită la un document film interesant
dau la părerea ta
această ficție nu este deloc adevărată
cum va fi tehnologia
nu aveți voie să stresați
m-au pus să fiu minister
e bine dacă sunt umoroși
o lume mai arhaică
să devină bătaș în timpul unei conversații
nu aș pune examenul de Cambridge

În corpusul nostru am identificat două calcuri sintactice: *dau la părerea ta** după modelul *adok a véleményedre*, respectiv *nu aveți voie să stresați** calchiat după modelul *nem szabad stresszelnetek*. Varianta maghiară are sensul ‘nu aveți voie să vă stresați’, studentul omițând particula *vă* din forma reflexivă a verbului *a se stresa*, forma în care expresia apare având alt sens: ‘nu aveți voie să stresați pe cineva’ (nu pe voi).

Dintre calcurile lexicale menționăm *se uită la un document film interesant**, calchiat după modelul maghiar *dokumentumfilm*, studentul făcând clar și o confuzie între *document* și *documentar*, ambele fiind desemnate în limba maghiară prin *dokumentum*. Un alt calc lexical este *această ficție nu este deloc adevărată** după modelul *fikció*, lexemul în limba română fiind *ficțiune*.

Exemplele *cum va fi tehnologia** respectiv *o lume mai arhaică** sunt calcuri ortografice sau mai degrabă greșeli de ortografie tipice, lexemele care se scriu cu *-h* în limba română având *-ch* în maghiară: *tehnologie/technológia*, *psihologie/pszichológia*, *psihiatrie/pszichiátria*, *tehnică/technika*, *almana/ almanach*, *arhaic/arhaikus*, așa cum și multe lexeme care conțin *-c* sunt scrise cu *-ch* în limba maghiară: *mecanică/mechanika*.

Exemplul *m-au pus să fiu minister** este clar un calc după maghiară, studentul făcând confuzia dintre *minister* (*minisztérium* în limba maghiară), adică denumirea instituției, „organ central al administrației de stat care conduce o anumită ramură a

³ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bastardize>

activității și este reprezentat de un ministru”⁴ respectiv lexemul maghiar *miniszter*, având sensul de ‘ministru’, și referindu-se la persoana care îndeplinește rolul de șef al ministerului. Este puțin probabil ca studentul să fi cunoscut faptul că *minister* obișnuia să însemne în trecut și ‘funcția de ministru’. *E bine dacă sunt umoroși** este un calc după adjectivul maghiar *humoros*, însemnând ‘cu umor’, ‘cu simțul umorului’, iar *să devină bătaș în timpul unei conversații** pare a conține un calc după *harcias*, însemnând ‘combativ’, ‘militant’, ‘bătăios’, forma *bătaș* fiind un lexem nepotrivit în acest context. *Nu aș pune examenul de Cambridge** este calchiat după modelul maghiar *letenni egy vizsgát* în locul variantei *a da un examen*.

Calchieri după engleză

Tabel 4. Calcuri după limba engleză (sursa: corpus propriu)

eu voi fi foarte bucuros dacă am o șansă să întâlnesc cu Barack Obama
El a fost un president american.
vreau să vizit muzeumile franceze
foarte multe oameni exersează un sport
baschet
Minadev este o abreviație
nu aș pune examenul de Cambridge
și eu îmi place să create imagini cu AI
țara pune un stop
fără profesori ar fi chaos
se îmbracă mai de modă
ceea ce pare abnormal
roboții poate să replică munca oamenilor
mi-am gândit la programarea și manufacturarea roboților
a făcut lucruri teribile
să facem a decizie

Enunțul *eu voi fi foarte bucuros dacă am o șansă să întâlnesc cu Barack Obama** conține cel puțin un calc după engleză: *dacă am o șansă* calchiat după *to have a chance* dublat de omiterea pronumelui *-l* din *să-l întâlnesc*, respectiv utilizarea prepoziției *cu* în loc de *pe*. Prepoziția *cu* ar fi fost potrivită dacă formularea ar fi fost *să mă întâlnesc cu*. Următorul exemplu provine din aceeași lucrare, formularea *El a fost un president American** este calchiat după englezescul *president* în loc de *președinte*.

Un exemplu interesant de calc este *vreau să vizit muzeumile franceze**, unde avem calcul *să visit* după modelul *to visit*, în loc de *să vizitez*, respectiv forma

⁴ <https://dexonline.ro/definitie/minister>

muzeumile, calchiat sau după englezescul *museum* sau după lexemul maghiar *múzeum*, în loc de forma românească *muzeu*, plural *muzee*, forma articulată *muzeele*.

Exemplul *foarte multe oameni exersează un sport** conține o greșeală de acord între substantivul masculin plural *oameni* și adjectivul utilizat la forma de plural feminin *multe*. *Exersează un sport* este un calc după expresia engleză *practice a sport*, în locul sintagmei *a face sport*. Un exemplu interesant este substantivul românesc *baschet*, scris inițial corect dar ulterior tăiat și corectat în denumirea englezească a sportului (*basketball*). Probabil studentul este familiarizat cu lexemul românesc dar folosește mult mai des denumirea în limba engleză. Exemplul *Minadev este a abreviație** conține forma *abreviație* în loc de *abreviere* (lexem cu care studenții au venit în contact în anul I de studii), *abreviație* fiind un calc după *abbreviation*.

Enunțul *și eu îmi place să create imagini cu AI** conține o greșeală recurentă la studenții maghiari, și anume utilizarea verbului *a plăcea* (în loc de *mie îmi place* forma incorectă *eu îmi place**), dar și două calcuri după engleză: în loc de *să creez imagini* studentul folosește *să create* după *to create*, și *AI* (*artificial intelligence*) în loc de *IA* (*inteligența artificială*). Enunțul *țara pune un stop** pare să fie un calc după *put an end to*, așa cum *să facem a decizie bună** este un calc după *make a decision*.

Există câteva exemple de calcuri care copiază ortografia modelului englezesc: *fără profesori ar fi chaos** în loc de *fără profesori ar fi haos*, *ceea ce pare abnormal** în loc de *ceea ce pare anormal*, respectiv *a făcut lucruri teribile** în loc de *a făcut lucruri oribile*. Exemplul *școlile ar fi chaotici** conține același calc după modelul englezesc (*chaotic** în loc de *haotic*) dar și o greșeală de acord, substantivul feminin plural *școlile* nefiind acordat cu adjectivul folosit la forma de masculin plural. Enunțul *roboții poate să replică munca oamenilor** conține un verb calchiat după model englezesc: *să replică* (dublat și de o greșeală de conjugare) este un calc după *replicate* cu sensul de ‘a copia’, ‘a dubla’, ‘a imita’. Enunțul păcătuiește și prin lipsa acordului dintre subiect și predicat (*roboții poate* în loc de *roboții pot*). *Mi-am gândit la programarea și manufacturarea roboților** conține o greșeală care provine din confundarea lui *mi-am* (pronume reflexiv în dativ + perfect compus) și *m-am* (verbul la diateza reflexivă cu pronumele în acuzativ); mai mult, observăm și un calc: *manufacturarea roboților* cu sensul ‘producerea, fabricarea roboților’, în timp ce în limba română *manufacturare* înseamnă ‘acțiunea de a fabrica obiecte de manufactură’.⁵

⁵ <https://dexonline.ro/definitie/manufacturare>

ERORI MORFO-SINTACTICE

În cadrul greșelilor morfo-sintactice am identificat următoarele subclase.

Conjugarea verbelor

Tabel. 5. Greșeli privind conjugarea verbelor (sursa: corpus propriu)

Forma eronată	Forma corectă
El îl place să uită la filme, să joacă	Lui îi place să se uite la filme, să se joace
Am plăcut foarte mult peisajul	Mi-a plăcut
părinții dacă vor să distrag atenția copiilor	dacă vor să distragă
mama ar trebui să-l dezvăță pe copilul	Să-l dezvețe
îmi plac să vorbesc	Îmi place
El are înalt	El este
El îl place să fac sporturile	Lui îi place să facă sport
Copilul ei nu a vrut să vorbește cu ei	Să vorbească
chiar acum trebuie să petrece foarte multe ore pe calculator	Trebuie să petrecem
în multe școli studenții utilizați laptopuri	utilizează
dacă aș fi bogat eu pot să ajut pe săracii	Aș putea ajuta
dacă aș avea superputeri eu aș citesc în gândurile	Aș citi gândurile
ei te invit în casa lor	Te invită
a crezut că noi certă în loc de ne certăm	Ne certăm
ei poate să crede	Ei pot crede/să creadă
orașele aș fi foarte monotone	Ar fi
aerul aș fi poluat	Ar fi
școlile aș fi dezordonate	Ar fi
Winston nu vrea să merg acolo	Să meargă
Daniel vrea să pune mașina la drum +prepoziție)	Să pună
ea a-și pune rochia roz	Își pune
Ela a se pune focul	pune
El a pune telefonul jos	A pus
nu puteți să schimb gândirea tuturor	Să schimbați
ar trebui să mutem într-un sat	Să ne mutăm
ar fi mai bine să aibăm curte mai mare	Să avem
oamenii lucrez	lucrează
oamenii a pornit	Au pornit
el nu știe cum să pătrunde	Să pătrundă
orașele poate produce	Pot produce

Cele mai mari dificultăți apar la utilizarea verbelor auxiliare (*a fi, a avea, a vrea*) dar și *a plăcea, a putea* și *trebuie*. Există multe exemple care dovedesc faptul că studenții nu sunt suficient de atenți la utilizarea formei corecte în cazul unor verbe cunoscute și frecvent utilizate, exemple pertinente în acest caz fiind actele de limbaj de tipul: *în multe școli studenții utilizați laptopuri**, *ei te invit în casa lor**, *Ela a se pune*

*focul**, *oamenii lucrez**, *oamenii a pornit**, *El a pune telefonul jos**, acest ultim exemplu fiind și un calc după maghiară: *letenni a telefon* în loc de *a închis telefonul*.

Verbul *a plăcea* este greu de înțeles, fiind utilizat deseori greșit, aceste erori fiind deja fosilizate probabil din anii de școală. În loc de conjugarea corectă la indicativ prezent *mie-mi place*, *ție-ți place*, *lui îi place* întâlnim exemple de tipul: *El îl place să uită la filme**, *El îl place să fac sporturile**, *îmi plac să vorbesc** sau în locul formelor de trecut *mi-a plăcut*, *ți-a plăcut* avem formulări de tipul *Am plăcut**.

Confuzia dintre *a fi* și *a avea* în *El are înalt** poate părea stranie, deoarece cele două verbe au forme și sensuri bine delimitate în limba română, dar în limba maghiară dincolo de sens există un caz aparte în ceea ce privește forma. Verbul existenței, *a fi* în română corespunde verbului *lenni* în limba maghiară: *én vagyok* = *eu sunt*. Pentru exprimarea posesiei (*a avea*), procedeele gramaticale utilizate în cele două limbi diferă: în limba română se utilizează verbul *a avea* acordat în număr și persoană cu subiectul. În limba maghiară predicatul care exprimă posesia este verbul *van* (*nekem van=eu am*), care este forma de persoana a treia singular a verbului existenței *lenni* (= *a fi*).

Exemplele numeroase de erori în conjugarea la timpuri relativ simple (prezent și timpurile trecutului) denotă lipsa expunerii suficiente la situații de comunicare în care aceste verbe sunt folosite, o probabilă fosilizare a formelor greșite (aceleași greșeli revin de mai multe ori în aceeași lucrare, dovada faptului că nu avem de-a face cu o eroare ocazională) dar și lipsa obișnuinței de verificare a formelor corecte, prin utilizarea unor resurse virtuale care stau la dispoziția studenților, cum ar fi de exemplu <https://www.conjugare.ro/>.

Modul conjunctiv pune de asemenea probleme: *părinții dacă vor să distrag atenția copiilor**, *el nu știe cum să pătrunde**, *nu poți să schimbi gândirea tuturor**, *ei poate să creadă**, *ar fi mai bine să aibăm curte mai mare**, *ar trebui să mutem într-un sat**; în ultimul exemplu greșeala de conjugare este dublată de nerecunoașterea formei corecte pentru 'a-și schimba domiciliul', forma reflexivă *a se muta*. Formele de condițional sunt de asemenea problematice, ducând la forme precum: *dacă aș fi bogat eu pot să ajut pe săracii**, *dacă aș avea superputeri eu aș citesc în gândurile**, *orașele aș fi foarte monotone**, *școlile aș fi dezordonate**. Exemplul *Daniel vrea să pune mașina la drum** arată și o problemă în ceea ce privește alegerea prepoziției potrivite.

Erori de gen

În cadrul erorilor legate de gen am identificat următoarele erori:

Tabel 6. Greșeli privind genul substantivelor (sursa: corpus propriu)

Părul ei este maro
Eu sunt foarte mândru
dacă aş avea mai multe bani
nu am avut o telefoană
foarte multe oameni acord

Primul exemplu este greșit deoarece avem de-a face cu un referent masculin, forma corectă fiind, în acest caz, *părul lui*. *Maro* este un exemplu de cuvânt greșit ales, explicabil prin faptul că în limba maternă există același cuvânt pentru desemnarea culorii maro și a părului șaten: *barna, maro*, în acest caz fiind cel mai probabil, calchiat după limba maghiară (*az ő haja barna*). *Eu sunt foarte mândru** este incorect: referentul este de sex feminin, forma corectă în acest caz fiind *eu sunt foarte mândră*. Enunțul *dacă aş avea mai multe bani** este eronat: substantivul *ban* este de gen masculin, utilizat aici la numărul plural, iar adjectivul se acordă în gen, număr și caz cu substantivul, forma corectă fiind *dacă aş avea mai mulți bani*. *Nu am avut o telefoană** denotă necunoașterea faptului că *telefon* este un substantiv de genul neutru, care la singular primește articolul nehotărât *un*. În exemplul *foarte multe oameni acord** nu se face acordul substantivului masculin *oameni* cu adjectivul, folosit la feminin; mai mult, remarcăm dezacordul subiect-predicat.

Erori de acord

Tabel 7. Greșeli privind acordul (sursa: corpus propriu)

îi plăcea creioanele săi
A fost o munte care a fost foarte frumoasă
Școlile fără electricitate ar fi rece și neîmplinit de viață
oamenii au un temperament foarte interesantă
Această etichetă este adevărat
Câte ziua trebuie să muncească ? Zile, muncesc
are un stil de viață sănătoasă
cu moartea ambele bunicii ai mei
folosirea internetului este obligatoriu
toți studenții va primi mâncare de calitate
are foarte mulți clădiri
Ministerul Adevărului este cel mai mare dintre cei patru ministre
când ai cineva cine poți să iubești adevărată, nu-l vezi pe alții
cea mai frumoasă sentiment în planetă este iubirea
sunt foarte multe țânțari
este un loc foarte frumoasă
aerul va fi poluată
etichetarea oamenilor este greșit

personajul fictiv numită Dracula
Ministerul Adevărului este cea mai mare dintre cei patru ministere
există patru ministere
am mers acolo cu alte voluntari și a fost foarte grozav și minunată
școlile ar fi dezordonată și inutile
revoluția feminist
modul de viață italiană
să înțelegem gândirea oamenilor care vorbesc acel limbă
Winston se pare un copil cărui e frică de necunoscut +vb tranzitiv reflexiv
Winston n-au avut succes
La cantină a trebuit să servească Winston masa
lumea descrisă este foarte monoton
meseriile care poate fii făcut de roboți
prin cunoașterea unor persoană
orașele va fii foarte monoton, nesănătos și obositor
pune o haine pe tine

Un aspect esențial al gramaticii limbii române este acordul: acordul dintre subiect și predicat (predicatul se acordă cu subiectul în număr, persoană, gen și caz), acordul în gen, număr și caz al substantivului cu adjectivul, articolul sau alți determinanți. În corpusul nostru am întâlnit destul de multe exemple de dezacord. Dintre acestea, notăm:

- lipsa acordului dintre subiect și predicat în privința genului: *Această etichetă este adevărat**.
- lipsa acordului dintre subiect și predicat în privința numărului: *orașele va fii foarte monoton, nesănătos și obositor** [dublat de lipsa acordului dintre substantivul *orașele* (neutru, plural) cu adjectivele *monoton, nesănătos și obositor*, toate utilizate la masculin singular] dar și utilizarea incorectă a verbului *a fi*; *meseriile care poate fii făcut de roboți** (predicat neacordat cu subiectul exprimat prin substantivul *meseriile*, aflat la numărul plural); *Winston n-au avut succes** (subiectul la singular și predicatul la plural, *n-au avut*); *îi plăcea creioanele săi** (subiect la plural și predicat la singular, dublat de un dezacord între substantivul *creioanele* și adjectivul pronominal posesiv *săi*).
- lipsa acordului dintre subiect și predicat în număr, gen: *Școlile fără electricitate ar fi rece și neîmplinit de viață** (lipsa acordului între subiectul *școlile*, substantiv la nominativ, plural, genul feminin și numele predicativ *rece și neîmplinit*, ambele utilizate la singular, masculin).
- lipsa acordului cu numele predicativ (numele predicativ care urmează după un verb copulativ se face în privința genului, numărului și cazului când numele predicativ este exprimat prin adjectiv, verb la participiu, pronume, adjectiv pronominal, sau prin numeral ordinal: *există patru ministere** (în loc de

ministere), *aerul va fi poluată** (numele predicativ la genul feminin deși subiectul este *aer*); *etichetarea oamenilor este greșit** (subiectul *etichetarea* la feminin și numele predicativ la masculin).

- lipsa acordului între substantiv și adjectiv (sau alți determinanți) în număr: *cu moartea ambele bunicii ai mei** (denotă clar un dezacord în număr, *bunici* fiind la plural, dezacord în caz: *ambele* în loc de *ambelor* și în gen: *ai mei* în loc de *ale mele*; *prin cunoașterea unor persoană* (în loc de *persoane*).
- lipsa acordului între substantiv și adjectiv (sau alți determinanți) în gen: *A fost o munte care a fost foarte frumoasă** în loc de *frumos*; Această etichetă este adevărat* în loc de *adevărată*; *oamenii au un temperament foarte interesantă** în loc de *interesant*; *are un stil de viață sănătoasă** în loc de *sănătos* (acordul fiind făcut probabil prin atracție cu substantivul feminin aflat în proximitate); *folosirea internetului este obligatoriu** în loc de *obligatorie*; *cea mai frumoasă sentiment în planetă este iubirea** în loc de *cel mai frumos*; *sunt foarte multe fânțari** în loc de *foarte mulți*; *este un loc foarte frumoasă** în loc de *frumos*; *personajul fictiv numită Dracula** în loc de *numit*; *Ministerul Adevărului este cea mai mare dintre cei patru ministre** în loc de *cel mai mare*; *revoluția feminist** în loc de *feministă*; *modul de viață italiană** în loc de *italian*.

Structuri reflexive

Tabel 8. Greșeli privind reflexivul (sursa: corpus propriu)

Forma eronată	Forma corectă
El vrea să întâlnim mult	El vrea să ne întâlnim des
Momentan nu pot să imaginez	Momentan nu pot să-mi imaginez
să se divorțeze de prima soție	să divorțeze de prima soție
Tu cum imaginez școala viitorului?	Tu cum îți imaginezi școala viitorului?
alții care nu se cunoaște limba maghiară	alții care nu cunosc limba maghiară
nu am gândit despre asta	nu m-am gândit la asta
cred că vom plictisim foarte mult	cred că ne vom plictisi foarte mult
ferestre care uite la malul mării	ferestre care se deschid către malul mării
Winston întoarce de la Minister	Winston se întoarce de la Minister
tehnologia dezvoltă în fiecare secundă	Tehnologia se dezvoltă în fiecare secundă
poate am începe să plimbăm mai mult	poate am începe să ne plimbăm mai mult
posibilități de a îmbrăca mai bine	posibilități de a ne îmbrăca mai bine
oare ce poate întâmpla acolo	oare ce se poate întâmpla acolo
locul castelelor se diferă	locul castelelor diferă
lumea a schimbat atât de repede	lumea s-a schimbat atât de repede
bucureștenii îmbracă frumos	bucureștenii se îmbracă frumos

Pronumele reflexive, verbele reflexive și diateza reflexivă constituie aspecte dificile ale limbii române pentru vorbitorii maghiari. Dacă pronumele reflexive nu par să pună probleme, dacă sunt învățate temeinic: *eu însumi/însămi/(én) magam; tu însuți/însăți/(te) magad; el însuși / ea însăși/(ő) maga; noi înșine/însene/(mi) magunk; voi înșivă/însevă/(ti) magatok; ei înșiși / ele înseși/(ők) maguk*, diateza reflexivă sau chiar conceptul de diateză pare a fi o problemă mai spinoasă în limba maghiară. Există lingviști care nu vorbesc deloc de diateză (Szende-Kassai, 2002), alții dimpotrivă (Forgács, 1998; Bokor, 2007). Verbele reflexive se formează prin adăugarea unor sufixe, de exemplu *kodik/-kedik/-ködik, -kozik/-kezik/-közik, -ózik/-őzik* care pot forma însă și alte tipuri de verbe, dar reflexivul se poate forma în limba maghiară și prin verbe active la care se adaugă un pronume reflexiv. În lingvistica românească diateza este o categorie verbală specifică, cu o manifestare sintactică și pragmatică deopotrivă (Pană Dindelegan, 2016, p. 264). Volumul coordonat de Pană Dindelegan și publicat sub auspiciile Academiei Române (2016) acceptă renunțarea la diateza reflexivă, pe care gramaticile tradiționale o descriau ca diateză de sine stătătoare alături de cea activă și cea pasivă. Alți autori vorbesc încă de diateza reflexivă (Harhăță, 2002; Condrea, 2017), arătând că cele mai frecvente valori ale verbelor reflexive în limba română sunt: „reflexiv-obiective: *el se îmbracă*; reflexiv-reciproce: „*își dau palme*; reflexiv-dinamice: *el se ruga de iertare*; reflexiv-pasive: *m-am născut iarna*; reflexiv-impersonale: *se doarme bine în hamac?*; reflexiv-eventive: *el s-a îmbolnăvit*.” (Condrea 2017).

Narcisa Forăscu (2002) afirmă că

Verbele reflexive sunt cele care se folosesc cu pronume reflexive, neaccentuate în dativ sau acuzativ. Unele sunt întotdeauna reflexive ca *a se teme, a se căi, a se preta, a se zbate, a se întâmpla, a-și asuma, a-și însuși* etc., altele pot avea o formă activă și o formă reflexivă, între care există diferențe de sens mai mari sau mai mici: *a duce – a se duce, a afla – a se afla, a certa – a se certa, a îndura – a se îndura, a ruga – a se ruga* etc. Există verbe care nu pot fi niciodată reflexive, adică nu pot fi însoțite de pronume reflexive: *a dura, a tuna, a ninge, a trebui, a voi, a leșina, a diseca*. Uneori verbele însoțite de pronume reflexiv sunt numai aparent reflexive, pronumele reflexiv raportându-se la substantivul care urmează verbului: *își iubește copilul, își spală cămașa* și are o valoare posesivă. (Forăscu, 2002)

Nu există o corespondență între inventarul de verbe reflexive românești și maghiare, prin urmare recunoașterea și utilizarea lor de către vorbitorii maghiari pot deveni anevoioase. În corpusul nostru există două fenomene: utilizarea unor verbe reflexive la alte diateze și inserarea unui reflexiv acolo unde nu este cazul.

- de-reflexizare⁶: *El vrea să întâlnim mult**; *Momentan nu pot să imaginez**; *Tu cum imaginez școala viitorului?**; *nu am gândit despre asta**; *cred că vom plictisim foarte mult**; *Winston întoarce de la Minister**; *tehnologia dezvoltă în fiecare secundă**; *poate am începe să plimbăm mai mult**; *posibilități de a îmbrăca mai bine**; *oare ce poate întâmpla acolo**; *lumea a schimbat atât de repede**.
- reflexizare; *să se divorțeze de prima soție**; *alții care nu se cunoaște limba maghiară**; *locul castelelor se diferă**.

*Ferestre care uite la malul mării** este un caz de calchiere din limba maghiară, expresia ‘ferestrele se deschid către, dau spre’ este exprimată în limba maghiară prin *az ablak a tengerre néz*, studentul traducând practic literal prin *fereastră [se] uită*.

Lipsa declinării sau a conjugării

Cunoștințele legate de flexiunea părților de vorbire nominale și a verbelor, declinarea și conjugarea corectă atestă competența lingvistică a unui vorbitor. Greșelile numeroase relevă cunoașterea precară a limbii, dat fiind că schimbările care sunt operate prin declinare și conjugare au scopul de a exprima genuri, numere, cazuri, timpuri, moduri verbale, nuanțe fără de care comunicarea nu este posibilă. Vocabularul, cunoașterea sensurilor cuvintelor și cunoștințele gramaticale constituie fundamentul cunoașterii unei limbi. În corpusul nostru am detectat erori legate de flexiunea în limba română. În tabelul de mai jos am selectat exemple în care declinarea sau conjugarea lipsește sau este realizată eronat.

Tabel 9. Greșeli privind conjugarea sau declinarea (sursa: corpus propriu)

a avut efect asupra prima vizită
are nevoie de activități cu familie
dacă aș fi bogat vreau să cumpăr o casă dacă aș vorbi pe limba franceză merg la Franța
dacă nu ar exista anotimpuri va fi mare catastrofă
AI produce numai lucruri false sau copieze munca alte artiști
asta nu putea să văd ca artă
Ioana a-ți pune mânuși
Alin a se pune bani pe cardul bancar

Surprinzător este faptul că verbele greșit utilizate sunt verbe frecvente (*a exista, a pune, a vrea, a putea* etc.).

⁶ Lexemele *reflexizare* și *de-reflexizare* sunt aici propuse de noi cu sensul de ‘tratarea unui verb nereflexiv ca fiind reflexiv’ respectiv ‘tratarea unui verb reflexiv ca și când ar fi nereflexiv’.

Plural incorect

Tabel 10. Greșeli privind pluralul substantivelor (sursa: corpus propriu)

Forma eronată	Forma corectă
Calculatorii	calculatoare
peștile nu există	Peștii
doi banuri	doi bani
alte popori	Alte popoare
spray penbtru insectii	Spray pentru insecte
roboturile sunt periculoase	Roboții sunt periculoși
învățătorii for fi înlocuite cu roboturi	învățătorii for fi înlocuite cu roboți
poate am începe să folosim biciclete, trotinete și chiar caluri	poate am începe să folosim biciclete, trotinete și chiar cai
Copiile nu ar învăța	Copiii nu învață
telefonii noștri	Telefoanele noastre
profesorile	profesorii

În exemplele de plural incorect identificate în corpus pluralul incorect *insecții** este format probabil pe baza asemănării fonetice cu *inspecției/inspecții*. Faptul că pluralul lexemului *copil* pune probleme nu surprinde, scrierea cu un *-i*, doi *-i* sau trei *-i* respectiv utilizarea articolului hotărât *-le* în mod eronat. Neașteptată este utilizarea incertă a pluralului în cazul unor referenți care fac parte din existența acestei generații de foarte multă vreme, cum ar fi lexemele *telefon* (utilizat sub forma telefonii*, *robot* (utilizat sub forma roboturi*, dar și *profesor* (utilizat sub forma profesorile*). Pluralul unor substantive din regnul animal (peștile* respectiv calurile*) relevă faptul că în comunicarea cotidiană în limba română aceste teme nu sunt abordate regulat, cuvintele sunt utilizate extrem de rar.

Ortografie

Tabel 11. Greșeli ortografice (sursa: corpus propriu)

răpdător	Răbdător
cânde le a făcut	când le-a făcut
Obama a fost descis cu toată lumea	Obama a fost deschis cu toată lumea
cum v-a fi școala în viitor	cum va fi școala în viitor
orașele fără verdeață ar fi grii	orașele fără verdeață ar fi gri
cum va fii lumea viitorului	cum va fi lumea viitorului
va fii medici în viitor	vor fi medici în viitor

lumea ar fii foarte rău	lumea ar fi foarte rea
viața oamenilor va fii plină de probleme	viața oamenilor va fi plină de probleme
verziunile scurte	versiunile scurte
întradevăr	Într-adevăr
eu aş-i dori să lucrez	eu aş dori să lucrez
orașele va fii	orașele vor fi
noiile tehnologii +calc	noile tehnologii
sper că copii noștri	sper că copiii noștri
majoritatea oamenilor	majoritatea oamenilor
folosirea cailor	folosirea cailor

În ceea ce privește categoria greșelilor pur ortografice, identificăm ezitări în utilizarea cratimei, incertitudini în privința scrierii cu unul sau doi *-i*, erori în ortografierea verbului *a fi*, scris în mod repetat greșit. Scrierea cu doi *-i* pare a fi o opțiune aleasă din hipercorectitudine, din frica de a nu greși. Uneori greșelile ortografice sunt dublate de o eroare în acordul dintre substantiv și adjectiv (*lumea ar fii foarte rău**) respectiv calcuri (*noiile tehnologii**).

Prepoziții

Tabel 12. Greșeli privind utilizarea prepozițiilor (sursa: corpus propriu)

campionatele difuzate în TV	campionatele difuzate la TV
când ai cineva	când ai pe cineva
mărul a fost pus la masă	mărul a fost pus pe masă
persoana în spatele etichetei	persoana din spatele etichetei
Maria a pus caietul la bancă	Maria a pus caietul pe bancă
punem telefonul pe o parte	punem telefonul de o parte
șeful a pus Andrea la recepție	șeful a pus-o pe Andrea la recepție
se îmbracă mai de modă	se îmbracă mai elegant

Rolul prepoziției din limba română este jucat în limba maghiară de postpoziție, ceea ce provoacă multe incertitudini cu privire la utilizarea acestora de către vorbitorii maghiari. Am identificat exemple la care studenții au folosit o prepoziție greșită (*campionatele difuzate în TV**, *mărul a fost pus la masă**, *persoane în spatele etichetei**) dar și exemple în care prepoziția a fost pur și simplu omisă (*când ai cineva**, *șeful a pus Andrea la recepție**). Uneori utilizarea greșită a prepoziției este dublată de omiterea unui pronume (*șeful a pus Andrea la recepție**), nerecunoașterea diferenței semantice dintre utilizarea unei prepoziții sau a alteia (*pe bancă* vs. *la*

bancă, pe masă vs. *la masă*), dar și opțiunea unor formule inexistente (*se îmbracă mai de modă**, unde sintagma *de modă* este resimțită ca fiind sinonimă cu 'elegant', 'la modă').

CONCLUZII

Chiar dacă nu facem diferența dintre *abatere* și *greșeală*, observăm că în producțiile analizate se regăsesc forme eronate utilizate din lipsă de cunoaștere sau din neatenție. Deși erorile sunt variate, se remarcă anumite categorii precum acordul, genul substantivelor, conjugarea respectiv structurile reflexive. Nu am intenționat să facem o cercetare cantitativă, dar la aceste categorii frecvența și numărul erorilor din corpus nu poate fi trecută cu vederea. Remarcăm unele forme insolite la cuvinte frecvent auzite: *telefon*, *robot*, *profesor* dar și dificultatea cu care vorbitorii maghiari folosesc diversele forme ale unui verb fundamental în limba română dar și în orice altă limbă, și anume verbul *a fi*: scrierea cu un *-i* sau cu doi *-i*, utilizarea condiționalului chiar și acordul verbului cu subiectul pot deveni problematice. Genul este un capitol aparte, deosebit de problematic din cauza lipsei categoriei genului în limba maghiară, fapt pentru care studenții nu pot recurge la repertoriul de cunoștințe pe care îl posedă. Genul substantivelor trebuie învățat, ca și regulile privind acordul, altminteri erori de tipul *o telefoană** sau *lumea este rău** se vor tot repeta.

Conjugarea verbelor și reflexivul sunt alte două categorii speciale ce necesită atenție sporită, uneori conjugarea la timpuri relativ simple a unor verbe frecvent utilizate par să pună probleme. Un aspect particular îl reprezintă, credem noi, acele perechi de verbe care au o formă reflexivă și una activă (*a spăla*, *a se spăla*), dar utilizarea acestora în exerciții comunicative ar putea reduce numărul greșelilor. Prepozițiile și mai ales acordul sunt alte capitole care necesită exerciții multe și variate. Traducerea didactică, traducerea unor enunțuri sau a unor propoziții care conțin multe prepoziții românești (*pe*, *la*, *în*) sau postpoziții maghiare (*-ban*, *-ba*, *-ra*) respectiv multe exerciții axate pe observarea importanței acordului în limba română ar ușura înțelegerea. Calchierea din limba maternă nu este un fenomen surprinzător. Remarcăm apariția și răspândirea unui fenomen care merită atenție, și anume apariția unui nou tip de calc în discursul românesc al vorbitorilor maghiari, calcul din limba engleză. Exemplele din corpus au fost numeroase. Fenomenul se explică, probabil prin imersiunea tot mai accentuată a studenților în mediul virtual, unde, de foarte multe ori, limba comunicării este limba engleză, ceea ce face ca atunci când sunt nevoiți să utilizeze limba română, ei tind să traducă

literal sau să calchieze lexeme pe care le utilizează acolo. Am identificat puține erori legate de cazul genitiv sau dativ (*din cauza fricăi**) respectiv de categoria pronomelor (*despre amândoi personaje există povestiri**). Care este soluția reducerii acestor fenomene de greșeli de limbă la vorbitorii maghiari? Exersarea și conștientizarea problemelor de limbă. Teoria foarte multă nu va ajuta, însă explicațiile țintite, scurte, eventual inserate în mici texte cu umor care să capteze atenția, ar putea fi utile în evitarea erorilor pe care vorbitorii maghiari le comit.

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Nimic nu e ce pare.

Filozofia teoriilor conspirației (III)¹

HORIA CĂPUȘAN²

Rezumat: În această lucrare, care urmează celor două lucrări precedente ale autorului pe tema teoriei conspirațiilor, se va încerca o scurtă privire asupra conspiraționalismului parodic, precum și, în încheiere, o evaluare de ansamblu a filosofiei conspiraționiste.

Cuvinte-cheie: *teoria conspirației, viziune conspiraționalistă, conspiraționalism parodic, pesimism, gnosticism.*

CONSPIRAȚIONALISMUL PARODIC

O probă a coerenței și adecvării unui model discursiv este dacă poate fi parodiat. Căci parodia tocmai asta face – îngroașă, uneori până la absurd, trăsăturile standard ale discursului. Or, și în cazul conspiraționalismului proba prin parodie poate să fie folosită. Să-l ascultăm pe Răzvan Exarhu într-un monolog al său (*Rock FM*, 13 august 2019): „Ieri o femeie și-a castrat bărbatul abuziv cu o pilă. Coincidență? Nu cred! Inteligența artificială preia controlul.” Sau: „Ieri o femeie și-a lovit bărbatul cu o bătă de baseball. Coincidență? Nu cred. Inteligența artificială preia controlul.”

De unde, după mai multe pasaje de același fel, și concluzia ineluctabilă: „Fraților, e clar că avem de-a face cu un savant nebun!”

Toate motivele conspiraționiste se află aici: conspiratorul ascuns (savantul nebun), determinismul extrem („Coincidență? Nu cred!”), voința care controlează totul ca o divinitate adevărată („Inteligența artificială preia controlul.”), planul

¹ Primele două părți ale lucrării de față au apărut în anii 2022, în volumul *Limbașele specializate în era digitală: abordări metodologice și practice*, editori: Roxana Nistor, Camelia Teglaș, Roxana Mihele, Raluca Zglobiu-Sandu, la Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, p. 229-241 și, respectiv, 2023, în *Limbașele specializate în contextul literației multimodale: abordări metodologice, provocări curente și perspective de dezvoltare*, editori: Roxana Mihele, Ioana Mudure-Iacob, Anamaria Lupan, Editura Presa Universitară Clujeană, Cluj-Napoca, p. 319-331.

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omniprezent (inteligența artificială), făpturile inocente, pe post de pioni (femeile, ce cred, probabil, că se eliberează de bărbatul abuziv din viața lor). Doar că, precum în orice parodie, mecanismul de producere a textului este atât de evident încât devine caricatural de-a dreptul. Mecanismul textului se autodenunță.

Nu e nici pe departe singurul text de acest tip. Literatura poate oferi numeroase exemple, precum celebra conversație din berărie de la începutul romanului *Peripețiile bravului soldat Švejk*, de Jaroslav Hašek, unde personajul susține sus și tare că otomanii sunt cei care l-au ucis pe arhiducele Franz Ferdinand. Sau, un alt exemplu, încă și mai evident, este cazul personajului pensionar din romanul *Viața, mod de folosire* de Georges Perec, personaj care colecționează dovezi că Hitler mai este încă în viață și că are numeroși agenți în lumea de azi. O adevărată antologie a conspiraționismului parodic este și scrierea *Pendulul lui Foucault* de Umberto Eco, autor care vădește, de altfel, o mare aplecare spre conspirații și teorii ale conspirației văzute ironic. Un alt exemplu este editorialul parodic din New York Times din 1894, citat de Daniel Pipes (1998, p. 199), conform căruia cei care se află în spatele tuturor schimbărilor din lume nu sunt membrii vreunei societăți secrete, cum s-ar putea crede, ci filateliștii. Sau declarațiile repetate ale lui Mircea Cărtărescu potrivit cărora singura ocultă în care el crede cu adevărat este aceea a făcătorilor de bancuri.

Totul se petrece ca și cum filonul sumbru al conspiraționalismului (pe care îl vom vedea apărând sau reapărând în final) ar trebui să fie îmblânzit și exorcizat prin ironie.

Iar atunci conspiraționismul parodic poate fi folosit inclusiv pentru contrazicerea și demontarea celui veritabil: „Da, eu recunosc că am primit mită și de la Organizația Mondială a Sănătății, ca să spun că pandemia există și de la NASA, ca să spun că pământul nu-i plat! Pentru că suntem uite-așa [gest care indică asocierea].” (Răzvan Zamfir, la emisiunea *Bună România*, 13 aprilie 2021).

EVALUARE FINALĂ

Această trecere în revistă a viziunii asupra lumii și a motivelor din teoriile conspiraționaliste s-a vrut a fi un examen obiectiv. Totuși nu putem să nu încercăm și o valorizare a acestor elemente.

Mai întâi – și trebuie să o spunem cu tărie, oricât de aberant ar putea suna – teoriile conspirației sunt și ele o formă de cunoaștere – ele fac, în felul lor, parte din efortul general uman de a căuta explicații pentru tot ce există în lumea acesta.

Deci, dacă ar fi facem o evaluare a lor din perspectiva adevărului, rezultatele ar fi împărțite. Sunt unele cazuri în care, de pildă, teama maladivă de conspirații a unor conducători celebri (care a făcut deseori obiectul ironiei în epocă) a fost, totuși, confirmată ca justificată de cercetări ulterioare, care le-au dat măcar parțial dreptate. Cercetări de arhivă au arătat, de pildă, că teama lui Frederic cel Mare de conspirația statelor vecine (Imperiul Habsburgic, Franța, Rusia) nu era chiar neîntemeiată. La fel, investigații toxicologice recente asupra cadavrului lui Ivan cel Groaznic au pus în evidență o concentrație anormală de mercur, ceea ce sugerează ipoteza unei otrăviri (lucrul de care el se temea cel mai mult). Nici teama de conspirații comuniste a senatorului Joseph McCarthy nu era total neîntemeiată (după cum s-a dovedit atunci când a căzut Uniunea Sovietică și arhivele secrete ale acestei țări au fost parțial desecretizate).

E drept, mai frecvent pare cazul celălalt – acela al unei teorii care provoacă în practică pagube uneori iremediabile, înainte de a se dovedi falsă (sau chiar și după aceea). Denunțurile lui Titus Oates, inspirate de propria sa teorie a conspirației catolice, s-au dovedit a fi false, dar numai după ce au provocat multă suferință și teamă. Sau, ca să dăm un exemplu și mai clar, *Protocoalele înțelepților Sionului* erau deja demonstrate ca falsuri încă din anii 20, ceea ce n-a împiedicat influența lor asupra multor actori politici din țările arabe și islamice până astăzi. Totuși, nu putem da aici un verdict exclusiv.

Dar poate că nici nu e nevoie. Căci o teorie a conspirației este un instrument de cunoaștere, dar în și mai mare măsură o viziune asupra lumii, un *Weltanschauung* – iar acest *Weltanschauung* trebuie caracterizat.

În general, trebuie spus că mai tuturor conspiraționaliștilor le place perspectiva eroică, lupta până la victoria finală. „Vor lovi cu piciorul în țepușă”, proclamă un conspiraționalist grec; „Jos Mafia, sus patria!” declamă un slogan electoral al partidului România Mare. Și regimul hitlerist, și cel comunist, fondate ambele de lideri cu puternice tendințe conspiraționaliste, se doreau a fi eterne.

Totuși, dacă urmărim premisele conspiraționalismului, așa cum le-am schițat aici, nu poate să nu ne frapeze profundul lor pesimism. Totul este o minciună, adevărurile esențiale ne sunt ascunse. Istoria e făcută de o serie de ticăloși, care au un control absolut sau aproape absolut asupra lumii și care par să câștige întotdeauna. Și, mai totdeauna, ei găsesc și trădători dispuși să-i servească. Și, oricum, banii și puterea sunt de partea lor. S-ar putea spune că teoriile conspirației sunt concentrate de nefericire pură.

Două analogii ne vin imediat în minte: prima este aceea cu un anume gen de gândire arhaică. Astfel, pentru Wilhelm Worringer, în carte lui *Abstracție și intropatie*

(1980), departe de a reprezenta o formă de comuniune fericită cu natura, din contră, gândirea primitivă e dominată de teama în fața unei lumi inexplicabile, în care, în spatele oricărei realități pândește o forță obscură și ostilă. De aici, încercarea continuă de a îmblânzi această realitate ostilă prin intermediul simplificării și stilizării. Analogia cu conspirațiile, așa cum sunt văzute de teoriile conspirației, este vădită: ambele viziuni, se poate spune, au o viziune „magică” asupra realității.

Analogii s-ar mai putea face, pe de altă parte, și cu ceea ce am putea numi „complexul gnostic”, așa cum este el descifrat de Ioan Petru Culianu (1995). Precum am notat deja, conspiraționalistul are tendința să se considere pe sine un posesor al cunoașterii adevărate în mijlocul unei lumi care o ignoră. Or, după I. P. Culianu, exact aceasta e poziția omului în universul gnostic – e o ființă superioară, prin fărâma de divinitate pe care o posedă, lumii și inclusiv creatorului său, un demiurg de mâna a doua, care nu cunoaște pe adevăratul Dumnezeu. Și conspiraționalistul se crede, ca și gnosticul, un inițiat, trăind în ruptură totală cu lumea rea care-l înconjoară. Or, ambele atitudini pe care le-am numit mai sus, cea „magică”, „primitivă”, și cea „gnostică”, incită la o devalorizare radicală a lumii (și rolul conspiraționalismului parodic e tocmai acela de a încerca să dezamorseze prin ironie acest potențial „nihilist”, în sensul lui Nietzsche).

Astfel, putem considera că teoriile conspirației sunt într-adevăr concentrate de nefericire individuală și socială; și corelația apare și mai clară dacă adoptăm o perspectivă istorică. Țările în care conspiraționalismul este mai puternic sunt tocmai cele care, până astăzi, au cea mai nefericită istorie; el este relativ mai slab (fără să lipsească, desigur) în țările relativ mai ferite de asemenea nenorociri. Nefericirea istorică naște teorii ale conspirației.

Dar și contrarul e adevărat – teoriile conspiraționaliste nasc deseori nefericire. Am vorbit deja despre denunțurile lui Titus Oates. Nefericirea înfrângerii va genera în Germania o serie de teorii ale conspirației care vor contribui nu puțin la ascensiunea lui Hitler. Durerea provocată de prăbușirea Uniunii Sovietice (cuantificabilă și în numărul mult sporit de sinucideri) și conspiraționalismul pe care l-a generat a contribuit, desigur, nu puțin la izbucnirea actualului război din Ucraina. Genocidul ruandez, războaiele din fosta Iugoslavie și nașterea organizației Stat Islamic, toate au avut loc într-o atmosferă intens conspiraționalistă. Totul se petrece ca și cum nefericirea acumulată într-o asemenea viziune asupra lumii ar tinde să se reverse tot mai mult și asupra altora (în ceea ce privește reversul acestei situații, el ar putea fi rezumat într-un titlu admirabil de carte: *Suferința nu se dă la frați*, care ar putea constitui chiar un preludiu al eticii. Dar despre asta altădată.)

Aceste caracteristici care conduc spre ideea unui pesimism al conspiraționaliștilor (lumea, așa cum e, este în mod sigur o lume rea, poate cea mai rea dintre lumile posibile, după cum afirma Schopenhauer, el însuși un filosof cu clare afinități gnostice) pot fi argumentate prin anumite însușiri generice care definesc în mod curent pesimismul sau optimismul filosofic (pentru Schopenhauer vezi comentariul lui Alain Besançon, 1996, p. 410-415).

Pentru început, o primă însușire generală ar fi aceea care ne spune în ce măsură o concepție despre lume admite schimbarea, evoluția. O concepție care admite cât de cât posibilitatea de a schimba, de a îmbunătăți lumea, trebuie să aibă o minimă doză de optimism. Dacă poți schimba lumea, o poți și face mai bună.

Or, din punctul de vedere al conspiraționaliștilor, ne aflăm exact la extrema pesimismului filosofic. Lumea nu se schimbă. Cel mult, niște aparențe mincinoase ne fac să credem altfel. Dar nu, nu e nimic adevărat.

Este de-a dreptul frapant că, fie că e vorba de conspiratorii care apar în asemenea teorii, fie chiar de cei care li se opun, cu toții nu vizează altceva decât revenirea la o stare de lucruri din trecut: refacerea este, în acest caz, cuvântul de ordine. Peste tot, în teoriile conspirației, este vorba de refacerea unor realități: evreii așkenazi (care, de fapt, sunt hazari, în esența lor) completează pentru refacerea imperiului lor de dinaintea invaziei mongole; maghiarii de azi completează cu gândul la refacerea Ungariei medievale sau a Austro-Ungariei; conform Mariei Zaharova, România completează ca să refacă statul fascist al lui Antonescu, conform Diane Șoșoacă (și lui Vladimir Putin), Polonia completează ca să reanexeze teritoriile ucrainene care i-au aparținut; militanții din cadrul Statului Islamic vorbesc despre catastrofa destrămării Califatului, pe care ei se însărcinează să-l readucă la viață (așa cum și Vladimir Putin vorbește despre destrămarea Uniunii Sovietice ca despre marea catastrofă a secolului al XX-lea). S-ar zice că istoria și-a epuizat resursele de noutate; imprevizibilitatea istoriei și caracterul singular al evenimentelor sunt înlocuite cu scheme simple și maniheiste.

Să mai adăugăm la aceasta și faptul că propensiunea conspiraționalistă spre „realități ascunse” tinde să dizolve singularitatea personalităților istorice într-o serie limitată de principii generale care se opun iremediabil. Arieni vs. evrei (la naziști), burghezi vs. proletari și comuniști vs. anti-comuniști (la comuniști), români (sau orice alt popor) împotriva străinilor – iată niște opoziții simbolice care pot servi la interpretarea oricărei situații. Și nu mai avem nevoie de vreo altă grilă de interpretare: conspiraționalistul știe că e în posesia cheii care poate deschide toate ușile. Așa că, până la urmă, totul este o eternă repetiție. Viziunea conspiraționalistă privilegiază, de multe ori până la caricatură, o perspectivă ce implică numai „la longue

durée” (un exemplu impresionant de acest fel e dat de fragmentul intitulat *Grupul de la Cluj – Hai România*, 14 februarie 2023 – Cornel Nistorescu în dialog cu Ion Cristoiu; dacă ar fi să-l credem pe unul dintre participanții la acest dialog, Cornel Nistorescu, exact aceleași structuri de putere care se manifestau în Cluj în secolul al XVI-lea se manifestă și acum – și conduc, de fapt, și România.)

Ceea ce e valabil pentru situații istorice rămâne valabil și pentru indivizi. În general, conspiraționaliștii tind să-i considere pe oameni imuabili, „tot ce-a fost o să mai fie” (și fără îndoială că acest caracter atemporal contribuie și la nota dezolantă și uniformă a unei bune părți din literatura conspiraționalistă). Vezi exemplul deja citat în partea întâi a articolului nostru referitor la Dacian Ciolos sau materialul intitulat *Acuzatorul Laurei Codruța Kövesi dă din colț în colț*, postat de Mălin Bot în 6 iunie 2017, unde acuzatorul Laurențiu Ionescu are tendința să creadă că (foștii) soți Kövesi nu s-au schimbat deloc într-un interval de 13 ani. E destul să ne gândim la abundența producției postrevoluționare a unui Radu Teodoru, decanul de vârstă al conspiraționaliștilor antisemiți de la noi, de exemplu. De multe ori, ideile circulă – sau chiar lucrări întregi apar – sub forma producțiilor anonime, asemeni materialelor folclorice, de aici și aerul evident vetust al unor site-uri conspiraționaliste, precum site-ul antisemit *Incorect politic*, care preia, pur și simplu, polemici antisemite din anii 1900, fără să-i pese de diferența de timp și context.

Un popor care nu merge stă pe loc sau chiar dă înapoi. Dacă istoria nu va progresa nicicum, ea va sfârși în mod necesar prin a merge înapoi. Conspiraționaliștii, tocmai de aceea, se dovedesc în marea lor majoritate, aprigi nostalgici. A existat întotdeauna o epocă de aur, epocă începuturilor unui neam, oricare dintre ele, epoca lui Ceaușescu pentru nostalgicii lui Ceaușescu, epoca lui Stalin pentru nostalgicii epocii staliniste sau epoca lui Gheorghiu-Dej pentru nostalgicii respectivi; epoca marilor califi omeiază pentru adepții Statului Islamic sau, din contră, epoca eroică a începuturilor islamului pentru militantismul de semn opus al šiitilor și exemplele ar putea continua multă vreme. Dar au existat întotdeauna niște ticăloși...! Niște conspiratori nelegiuți care au distrus totul.

E drept, teoriile conspiraționaliste invocă, de cele mai multe ori, urgența acțiunii pentru a combate flagelul conspirației. Dar să nu ne înșelăm: viitorul și proiectele constructive nu sunt deloc punctul forte al conspiraționaliștilor; discursul lor este aproape în totalitate o diatribă împotriva prezentului. Printre multe alte exemple, unul extrem de impresionant e datorat lui Corneliu Vadim Tudor și se numește *Plugușorul tribunului*, cunoscut în mai multe variante – eu am ales-o pe cea mai completă, care circulă pe platforma *TikTok*, accesată la 25 decembrie 2022 și 7 februarie 2023.

Conspirația provoacă o cădere totală și iremediabilă, resimțită în toate domeniile. Înainte se făceau filme serioase, cu eroi naționali, astăzi nu mai avem decât plictiseală mizerabilistă. Scriitorii care ne sunt băgați astăzi pe gât nu se pot în niciun caz compara cu adevăratele valori ale perioadelor precedente, ca Marin Preda, Nichita Stănescu sau Radu Aldulescu – ei sunt numai creațiile unui sistem artificial de publicitate. Muzica ușoară adevărată e aceea a Andei Călugăreanu, a Angelei Similea sau a Mirabelei Dauer, nu cea a lui Smiley sau Delia. Nici fotbal sau sportivi adevărați nu mai avem. Evreii au provocat căderea regimului Ceaușescu (conform lui Ilie Neacșu sau Cornel Dan Niculae). Nu se mai produce nimic în țară, suntem o țară de consumatori, o colonie economică a altora (Diana Iovanovici Șoșoacă dixit). Evreii, prin intermediul creștinismului și al spiritului lor mercantil, au contaminat rasa ariană, conform lui Alfred Rosenberg. Trădătorii sunniți (conform teoriilor conspirației din Iranul fundamentalist) sau cei șiiți (conform ISIS) au distrus unitatea islamică originară. Infiltrarea islamului și creștinismului au distrus unitatea tradițională hindusă (conform naționalismului hindus) etc. etc. etc.

Încă o dată conspiraționalistul se refugiază în scheme simple; totul se rezumă în fond la ideea conform căreia există întotdeauna destui ticăloși ca să distrugă ce au făcut alții înainte. Ajunge întotdeauna o bătă la un car cu oale, cum s-ar zice.

Toate acestea nu dovedesc altceva decât că „eul conspiraționalist”, cum l-am putea numi, se simte străin într-o realitate pe care o resimte insuportabilă. Conspiraționalistul e, în mod categoric, un „străin în lume”, pentru a parafraza un bine-cunoscut cântec protestant. Și el, ca Ivan Karamazov, sau chiar ca Alioșa Karamazov în momentele lui de furie, nu acceptă lumea așa cum e. Putem califica (așa cum am făcut-o deja) acest sentiment ca fiind gnostic. Gnosticul se definește pe sine ca un eu pierdut într-o lume neautentică, față de care se știe superior – el posedă o cunoaștere superioară care îl leagă direct de creatorul adevărat al lumii, în timp ce lumea „așa cum este” nu e altceva decât cel mult o emanație a „demiurgului cel rău”, ca să vorbim ca Emil Cioran, el însuși un mare admirator al doctrinelor gnostice.

Și, într-adevăr, asemenea trăsături ale neautenticității lumii ne întâmpină peste tot în discursul conspiraționist – fie că e vorba de *fals* sau de *falsificare*, *înscenare*, *minciună*, *ascunderea adevărului*, de *tot ce știai sau tot ce ai învățat este fals*, efectul este același. Dana Budeanu, o conspiraționistă foarte vocală, folosește în exces termenul de „făcătură”, care pentru ea are o semantică foarte largă, începând cu războiul din Ucraina și sfârșind cu exploziile de la Crevedia. Ion Cristoiu, în ce-l privește, preferă termeni ca *diversiune*, *fumigenă* sau *pocnitoare*. Spațiul profund, acela care ar trebui să fie spațiul substanțialității și al adevărului, se retrage, lăsând locul unei cortine de fum. Această lume pe care o vedem încontinuu în fața noastră

nu e lumea cea adevărată. Am fost obișnuiți să credem că lumea aceasta ar avea vreo consistență, dar ne înșelăm.

Și măcar dacă această aparență ar trimite cât de cât la o realitate obiectivă. Dar nu, ea este rodul unei acțiuni omenești deliberate. Cineva vrea să ascundă adevărul, să ne „prostească”. Termenul acesta sau termeni echivalenți apar peste tot la teoreticienii conspirației de toate felurile.

„Nu vedeți că totul e o diversiune?” (Ion Cristoiu, citat de NCN, 21 august 2020.)

„Asta vor ei să ne facă să credem.” (barman din Cluj, referitor la explicația conform căreia accidentul care a pus capăt carierei avionului Concorde s-ar fi datorat, pur și simplu, unei circumstanțe nefericite.)

„Adevăruri despre daci care vă sunt și astăzi ascunse” (titlul unui documentar pe *YouTube*, realizat de Daniel Roxin.)

Astfel, teoriile conspirației fac trecerea la nivelul următor, acela care contează, guvernat de Demiurgul cel rău. Desigur că și René Descartes pomenea de un demiurg viclean căruia i-ar plăcea să-și înșele la nesfârșit creaturile. Dar la Descartes aceasta era doar o ipoteză rapid dezmințită în favoarea celei opuse, aceea a unui Dumnezeu bun, absolut incapabil să-și înșele creaturile. La conspiraționiști, însă, această ipoteză tinde să devină permanentă. Așa cum în teologia creștină „cerurile cântă slava lui Dumnezeu” și toate semnele creației trimit către un Dumnezeu bun, aici, din contră, toate semnele trimit spre prezența mai multor dumnezei răi.

Și măcar dacă ar fi dumnezei. Dar nu sunt decât oameni ca toți oamenii, doar că într-o variantă augmentată prin răutatea lor hiperbolică. Prin aceasta, teoriile conspirației oferă, între altele, și un substitut laicizat al teologiei gnostice, în care locul divinității e luat de oameni.

Dar dacă istoria lumii e laicizată, noi demiurghi preiau întru totul caracteristicile celui vechi. Lumea teoriilor conspirației e o adevărată epifanie a răului.

Mai întâi, oamenii, așa cum apar înfățișați aici, sunt unidimensionali. Nu neapărat în sensul lui Herbert Marcuse, deși sensul acela poate fi relevant pentru o asemenea tipologie – ci la nivelul mai prozaic al lipsei complexității, al sărăciei tipologice. Ce-l frământă pe conspirator, ce-l motivează să meargă înainte? Setea de putere (un termen, de altfel, destul de vag definit), mai concret, interesul și puterea iau mai frecvent două forme – banii și sexul (în cartea lui, *Erorile judiciare*, 2007, p. 212, Jacques Vergès deplânge primitivismul concepției unor procurori care nu imaginează ca mobilități posibile decât banii și sexul. Dar și despre mulți conspiraționiști s-ar putea spune același lucru.).

Banii: e suficient să ne gândim de câte ori cineva plătește pe altcineva în teoriile conspirației. Manifestanții din 1990 din Piața Universității erau acolo pentru că erau plătiți de partidele istorice; cei din 2017-2018 din Piața Universității erau plătiți de George Soros sau de una sau mai multe multinaționale, sau de Raiffeisen Bank; opozanții proiectului Roșia Montană erau plătiți de același Soros, opoziția tunisiană primește bani din străinătate pentru a aduce cât mai mulți africani și a schimba astfel compoziția etnică a țării (conform președintelui tunisian Kaïs Saïed – *Courrier International*, martie 2023); opoziția zimbabweană din *Movement for Democratic Change* e în slujba Marii Britanii (conform prim-ministrului zimbabwean Robert Mugabe, *BBC World Service*, 15 martie 2003).

În ce privește sexul, și el este prezent în numeroase combinații conspiraționiste. Este suficient să ne gândim la teoria celor trei femei fatale (sau malefice) din istoria României, care ar fi stricat fiecare câte un bărbat inocent: Elena Lupescu pe Carol al II-lea, Ana Pauker pe Gheorghiu-Dej și Elena Ceaușescu pe Nicolae (teorie populară în anii 1990-2000 și menționată între alții și de Lucian Boia, 1997, p. 382, care remarcă și el că României îi lipsește un mit feminin pozitiv). Certurile persistente dintre Sebastian Ghiță și Laura Codruța Kövesi s-ar datora faptului că inițial ar fi fost amanți (interpretare încurajată de Sebastian Ghiță însuși). În perioada Băsescu au existat ample speculații despre influența femeilor, și în special a Elenei Udrea, asupra președintelui. Corneliu Vadim Tudor a pretins (*România Mare*, 23 iulie 1994) că i-ar fi sugerat lui Nicolae Ceaușescu o strategie de „cucerire a lumii prin femei” (și de altfel, același text exprimă și ideea, larg răspândită în anii 1990-2000, că performanța superioară a Ungariei față de România în materie de vizibilitate internațională s-ar datora faptului că un număr mare de oameni politici occidentali importanți ar avea neveste provenind din această țară). Mulți conspiraționiști cred într-adevăr, precum mulți alții, că erosul conduce lumea.

Aceeași unilateralitate ne întâmpină și în ce privește portretul moral al conspiratorului. Printre ele, în primul și în primul rând, lăcomia. Conspiratorii sunt genul de oameni care, oricât ar avea, nu le ajunge niciodată. Că e vorba de George Soros sau Bill Gates (nu e o întâmplare că se găsesc atâtea miliardari printre conspiratori), de șefii serviciilor secrete de la noi sau de aiurea sau de entități mai vagi, precum evreimea internațională sau clubul Bilderberg, toți se caracterizează prin aceeași rapacitate hiperbolică. Lăcomia față de bunul altuia este dată de multe ori ca fiind mobilul din spatele unor evenimente: Elena Udrea a acuzat Grupul de la Cluj și pe unul dintre membrii lui, Neluțu Varga, că ar fi în spatele stopării proiectului *Transilvania Smart City*, ei urmărind, de fapt, preluarea lui; Cătălin Hideg, denunțatorul generalului Florian Coldea, credea că serviciile urmăreau, de asemenea, să-i preia

afacerea cu materiale medicale și aceeași motivație a fost invocată și de Ion Niculae. Pentru un adept al teoriilor conspirației o acțiune dezinteresată e o contradicție în termeni la fel de mare ca un fapt întâmplător. Dacă cineva vrea să ne convingă că a făcut ceva doar de amorul artei, înseamnă că vrea să ne înșele. Nu, realitatea dură e că în spatele oricărei acțiuni umane, oricât de dezinteresată sau de eroică ar părea, nu e decât „enteresul și iar enteresul”. Deseori conspiraționistul se pune pe sine în situația celui care, având cunoașterea adecvată a motivelor pentru care oamenii acționează, dau totdeauna explicația exactă:

„DNA lansează o nouă pocnitoare mediatică: cazul Pițurcă” (titlul unui articol de Ion Cristoiu, *Mediafax.ro*, 17 februarie 2023);

„Diversiunea Florin Salam” (titlul unui editorial de Sorin Ovidiu Bălan, publicat în podcastul *Hai România*, 19 februarie 2024);

„Cine vrea ruperea Banatului de țară?” (titlu în *România mare*, 2 aprilie 1990).

Conspiraționalistul știe de fiecare dată care sunt motivele pentru care oamenii acționează. Și adevărul e că, de fapt, în lume nu dăm decât de motivele cele mai brutale și stupide. Lumea noastră e lumea lui *homo homini lupus*.

În această lume, ocupația favorită a ființelor umane e de a-și face concurență și de a se distruge reciproc. Explicația favorită e atunci aceea care evidențiază reaua intenție și voința de a-l anihila pe celălalt. „Se trage cu toate armele din dotare împotriva lui Dan Diaconescu.” (Sorin Roșca Stănescu, *Ia pastila de SRS*, 16 mai 2023). „[...] Mercenarii puterii trag în Ion Cristoiu din toate pozițiile” (*Evenimentul zilei*, 2 martie 1997).

Orice persoană ar face absolut orice pentru a-l da pe celălalt la o parte și a se pune pe sine în locul lui: societatea e un fel de „scoală-te tu ca să mă așez eu” generalizat:

„Grupul de la Cluj dorește să-mi ia afacerea” (afirmație repetată de multe ori de Elena Udrea în timpul scandalului *Transilvania Smart City*);

„Dosarele făcute lui Arpad Paszkany [...] prin care se voia cedarea clubului CFR către Neluțu Varga, favoritul Grupului de la Cluj.” (probabil Liviu Man, într-un editorial anonim din *Gazeta de Cluj*, 25 februarie 2024);

„Eu refuz să fiu proastă [...] e vorba de preluarea afacerii Doldurea.” (Dana Budeanu, referindu-se la exploziile de la Crevedia, citată de *G4Media*, 27 august 2023).

Astfel, în lumea noastră reală, singurul lucru care-i motivează realmente pe oameni este să ia locul celorlalți. Istoria se rezumă la un fel de luptă surdă în care toată lumea vrea să înhațe câte ceva de la toată lumea. Singurul orizont al devenirii umane e coșmarul darwinist. Dar, pe lângă lăcomie, mai există și o altă constantă în

comportamentul uman, așa cum e văzut de teoriile conspirației: anume duplicitatea. Oamenii, în aceste teorii, spun inevitabil altceva decât ce gândesc:

„Scopul acestor convorbiri între superputerile Statele Unite și Uniunea Sovietică nu poate fi nici pacea, nici dezarmarea.” (*Radio Tirana*, în limba română, 5 august 1987 – idee omniprezentă în propaganda regimului Enver Hodja);

„Să fie Victor Ponta atât de pervers?” (titlul unui editorial de Sorin Roșca Stănescu, în *Ziua de Cluj*, 25 noiembrie 2013).

Duplicitatea se asociază în mod natural cu trădarea deja menționată. De altfel, o imagine care obsedează pe conspiraționiști e aceea a lui Iuda Iscarioteanul: „Sărutul trădării pe obrazul Gabrielei Firea” (legendă ce însoțește o fotografie a premiului Ciolacu sărutând-o pe obraz pe Gabriela Firea, ilustrând un text semnat de Ion Cristoiu, *Mediafax.ro*, 12 iunie 2023).

Între scopurile declarate public și cele asumate în secret apare o prăpastie. Oamenii politici, statele, organizațiile de orice fel, mint cu privire la orice: situația economică, politică, corupție, războiul din Ucraina, COVID etc. Concluzia logică este, atunci, că într-un asemenea univers nu există sinceritate și transparență și că e naiv sau mincinos cine susține contrariul.

Iar dacă am menționat rolul important al rapacității în explicațiile conspiraționiștilor, atunci nu putem să nu menționăm și un alt mobil extrem de prezent: invidia. Conspiratorii, mai precis, îi invidiază pe cei împotriva cărora complotază:

„De ce m-atacă toți acești oameni? Eu cred că din invidie.” (Marian Vanghelie, citat în *Ziua*, 5 ianuarie 2005);

„Da, sigur, pentru toți autorii fără operă problema aceasta a relațiilor cu Securitatea e mană cerească.” (Victor Roncea, *Scriitorii și Securitatea*, pe site-ul *Active News*, 20 august 2023).

Să nu uităm și unul dintre motivele cele mai puternice în teoriile conspiraționiste: răzbunarea. Nu numai că, de multe ori, conspirațiile sunt răzbunări, dar natura răzbunătoare face parte din caracterul însuși al conspiratorului:

„[...] Nemții [...] nu le pot ierta sârbilor ce le-au făcut în Al Doilea Război Mondial” (Ielchița Petrovici, în *România Mare*, 6 noiembrie 1998);

„E o răzbunare a lui Victor Ponta [...] așa e el.” (Constantin Mischie, fost președinte al CJ Gorj, citat de *ProTV*, 12 iunie 2011).

Istoria, în viziunea acesta, e o succesiune de răzbunări. Templierii reînviați sub forma francmasoneriei s-au răzbunat pe regalitate și, de aici, Revoluția Franceză; iluminatii din Bavaria s-au răzbunat pe regimurile tradiționale ale Europei și, de aici, o bună parte din istoria ultimelor două secole și ceva; în numeroase versiuni, naziștii caută răzbunarea pentru înfrângerea suferită în Al

Doilea Război Mondial (inclusiv într-un film din seria *Captain America*; sau, la modul parodic, în romanul *La vie mode d'emploi* de Georges Perec, unde există un personaj care crede că Hitler trăiește și conduce o vastă rețea internațională); Statele Unite au vrut să-l pedepsească pe Victor Ponta pentru îndrăzneala de a extinde relațiile României cu Rusia și China și, de aici, incendiul din clubul Colectiv (teorie afirmată de Sorin Ovidiu Vîntu într-un podcast din 19 ianuarie 2021); același incendiu din clubul Colectiv a fost provocat de Mossad, care, în felul acesta, dorea „să trimită un mesaj României” privitor la inculparea proprietarului clădirii Pionierul, Gideon Zelivanski (teză afirmată de site-ul *Active News*); problemele în justiție ale Elenei Udrea ar fi rezultatul unei răzbunări a lui Florian Coldea pentru faptul că ea ar fi depus plângere penală împotriva lui (teorie susținută în mod repetat chiar de Elena Udrea, între altele în interviul în trei părți cu Anca Alexandrescu, *Realitatea TV*, 23, 30 august, 6 septembrie 2019).

Imaginea diverșilor conspiratori formează un fel de structură ierarhică. Iată un asemenea exemplu, la fostul deputat PSD Mădălin Voicu, citat de Radu Paraschivescu, 2018, p. 95-98:

Grupul de Illuminati și ceilalți arhitecți ai răului se grupează, conform teoriilor din care se alimentează și punctul de vedere al lui Mădălin Voicu, într-o piramidă a puterii, care se sprijină pe ceva numit, cu un termen care te face să tremuri (paranteză de răs) „satanismul talmudismului masonic”. În vârful piramidei se găsește „ochiul care vede tot”, sub care, la nivelul I, stă o persoană care seamănă cu regina Angliei, dar nu e. Conspiraționiștii cu doctorat în paranoia galopantă denumesc acest organ atotvăzător „ochiul lui Lucifer” sau „ochiul lui Satan” și susțin că entitatea care are controlul asupra lui controlează și banii lumii [...] Ceea ce le atrage atenția, în schimb, este prezența la nivelul 2, imediat sub regina care seamănă cu Elisabeta, dar nu e, a treisprezece familii, care compun previzibil „Consiliul celor 13”. Ele sunt, conform descrierii, „cele mai puternice și bogate familii din lume” și stau deasupra nivelului 3 (logic), populat de 300 de „subfamilii”. Care știți ce alcătuiesc? „Comitetul celor 300” [...] Și, de fapt, nici nu e vorba de familii, ci de dinastii în toată regula: Astor, Li, Russell, Rockefeller, Kennedy, Freeman, Du Pont, Onassis, Van Duyn, Rothschild, Collins, Reynolds și Bundy.

Sau acest exemplu și mai remarcabil, plin de forță imaginativă, datorat lui Andrei Caramitru: „Când mai auziți de cancelar, ministru de externe, de interne, să știți că nu e vorba de ei, ci de un general KGB, care păpușează toate personajele astea. [...] Nu există ei, există doar un general KGB alcoolic, răspunzător de oblastul numit Austria” (citat de *știripesurse.ro*, 14 februarie 2023).

Iată cum arată un univers condus de un demiurg rău. Față de această realitate, teoreticianul conspirației tinde să se retragă într-o orgolioasă opoziție. Ca orice bun

gnostic, el se crede posesorul cunoașterii adevărate; ceilalți nu știu, dar el știe. Toată literatura aceasta de tipul teoriilor conspirației este, între altele, și expresia unei imense mândrii.

În forma cea mai concretă ea are drept consecință dorința de a-i edifica pe ceilalți, de a le împărtăși celorlalți din această cunoaștere:

„Măi oameni buni, nu vedeți că totul e o diversiune ordinară?” (Ion Cristoiu, citat de NCN, 21 mai 2020).

Un canal conspiraționalist activ pe *TikTok* se numește *Deșteaptă-te române*, numele lui părănd copia numelui unui site american de aceeași natură – *The Clever Line*.

Și, cu toate acestea, să nu ne înșelăm: repulsia conspiraționistului față de lume se extinde și asupra potențialilor săi adepți. Faptul că el îi include sau încearcă să-i includă în comunicare nu înseamnă că-i pune pe același plan cu el. Dimpotrivă, separarea, disocierea dintre teoreticianul conspirației și lume se manifestă și aici. Astfel, pentru Ion Cristoiu, suntem, fără îndoială, „un popor complexat”; potrivit gastroenterologului Popescu (citat în Paraschivescu 2020, p. 284) tinerii se duc la manifestație „ca oile”; Dana Budeanu, conform replicii ei preferate, „refuză să fie proastă”; Cozmin Gușă și H. T. Hartmann folosesc și ei frecvent replica „asta-i pentru proști”, iar Liviu Alexa își manifestă frecvent dezgustul față de activismul clujean.

Avem astfel bine-cunoscutul model al profetului neînțeles, care trăiește într-o ruptură asumată cu ceilalți. Uneori, însă, e drept, dezgustul față de ceilalți se poate transforma în dezgust de sine și atunci se poate întâmpla chiar ca un teoretician al conspirației să-și plângă de milă lui însuși, vezi fragmentul fără titlu postat pe canalul de *YouTube Hai România*, la 17 septembrie 2022, protagoniști fiind Mirel Curea, Robert Turcescu și Mirel Palada, foarte semnificativ din punctul acesta de vedere. Cei trei se plâng că ar fi fost manipulați politic în anii '90 și le plâng de milă manifestanților din 2017-2018, care, după ei, ar fi avut aceeași soartă. Dorința conspiraționistului de a se adresa celorlalți nu atenuează, în fond, mizantropia lui fundamentală.

Și ar mai fi de reliefat un lucru. Pe parcursul acestei lucrări, am prezentat câteva modele de organizare socială, așa cum le văd teoreticienii conspirației, or, în mod absolut invariabil, ele sunt structuri ierarhice rigide, în frunte cu un șef necontestat, asistat de un grup restrâns de sfetnici foarte credincioși. Iar tipul de relații care-i leagă pe oameni în aceste structuri sunt cele de tipul putere și constrângere:

„România nu este condusă de România, să fie foarte clar!” (Mădălin Voicu, citat de Radu Paraschivescu, 2018, p. 93);

„Numai așa (gestul pocnitului din degete) să facă Putin și 7 milioane de africani vin în Europa imediat.” (Dana Budeanu, în dialog cu Răzvan Dumitrescu, *Antena 3*, 3 martie 2023);

„Cineva a zis: toată lumea să stea în case.” (Ion Cristoiu, citat de Radu Paraschivescu, 2020, p. 236);

„Eu cred că s-a primit un telefon de la ambasada SUA, pentru Nicușor Dan, și, de la ambasada Franței, pentru Clotilde Armand.” (Liviu Dragnea, pe canalul propriu de *YouTube*, 2 aprilie 2024).

Unii poruncesc, alții se supun – nu poate fi altfel. Modelul preferat de societate al aproape tuturor teoreticienilor conspirației pare a fi dictatura – acesta poate pentru că modelul, de fapt, îi fascinează pe ei înșiși? Oricum, societățile secrete, serviciile de spionaj care-i fascinează atât de mult sunt tocmai structuri cu disciplină militară. Nu numai atât, dar și o anumită teorie a naturii umane se deduce de aici. Teoreticienii conspirației sunt în mare parte adepți ai ideii că omul e rău de la natură și că singurul mod de a-l îmbunătăți cât de cât este prin constrângere. La noi, specialistă în materie (am numit-o pe Dana Budeanu) oferă numai ea numeroase exemple. Iată unul dintre multe altele: „Știți cum au civilizat marile imperii, Imperiul Roman, cel englez, știți cum au civilizat lumea? Prin forță! Astea-s regulile. Vrei – bine, nu – plătești!” (*Antena 3*, 14 septembrie 2023, în dialog cu Răzvan Dumitrescu)

Cercul astfel s-a închis. Pornind de la axiomele gândirii conspiraționaliste am ajuns la o trecere în revistă (parțială) a toposurilor ei, sfârșind cu gândirea profundă, cu *Weltanschauungul* ce stă la baza acestor teorii. Gândirea conspiraționalistă, oricât ar putea suna de pretențios, e, în esență, o viziune asupra lumii.

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How to Create Advertising That Sells

OLGA BĂLĂNESCU¹

Abstract: The present paper is focused on highlighting one of the most efficient techniques of targeting and persuading the consumer, namely the use of the interrogative discourse in building the advertising message, since the major objective of advertisers all around is to sell the promoted product/service to a larger and larger target. This is why, the present paper considered important to outline, from the very beginning the difference between colloquial speech and the advertising discourse regarding their interrogative construction, as the latter offers us interesting clues for understanding the very key of persuading the target. As it is already known, pragmatics is the linguistic discipline interested in analyzing the spoken language, and advertising represents one of the most obvious patterns of everyday talk. Therefore, both linguistic and pragmatic means have been used when looking into the selected advertisements which constitute the case study. It should be also mentioned that there can be distinguished two main forms of advertising nowadays: ATL (above the line) and BTL (below the line) achievements with a new intermediate form in between, TTL (through the line) which seems to combine both of them. All of them can successfully and efficiently use the interrogative discourse. This interrogative discourse can be wisely used in building the advertising headline in order to facilitate the presence of the body-text, which thus appears to be the best and the only possible answer given by the advertiser to the consumer who has a certain need. This way, the promoted product/service turns out to be the best option the consumer may have regarding his/her need.

Keywords: *headline, deictic elements, pragmatic act, ATL/BTL advertising, target.*

INTRODUCTION

Advertising is, undoubtedly, an effervescent and deeply actual domain, although it is as old as time –if we take into consideration the ancient slates and inscriptions discovered in Babylon, for instance, proofs of promoting various types of products or small productive workshops. Nowadays, advertising is a dynamic field where competition may be regarded as one of its guiding rules.

How to create advertising that sells is a matter that preoccupies the advertisers' mind all the world and guides their activity with the view to face and conquer fierce competition, taking into account that the technological processes

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present no deep secrets for nowadays producers, a fact which implies that the differences among brands are given not by rational, but by emotional elements, able to impress and persuade the target. Starting from the premise that practice is more important than theory in advertising, the present paper embarks upon bringing together both pieces of advice belonging to well-known contemporary advertisers (art directors, creative directors, chairmen or vice-chairmen in great advertising agencies), and opinions of theorists, in order to present a coherent profile of an efficient print-ad.

Advertising plays a major part in strengthening the feeling of satisfaction the consumer experienced towards those brands which have been already purchased. People tend to pay greater attention to those messages closely related to their social status or values system.

Thus, successful advertising messages should be regarded as real indicators of creativity (Hackley, 2021). Such an example could be offered by Michael Jackson, as the guarantor of Pepsi; the well-known singer was indicating that the time had changed and the Company had become a „cool one”, as Ron Mather, ex-creative director at The Campaign Palace, at present executive director at Grey Worldwide Australia has noted. It is important to take into consideration his opinions as he one of the advertising industry most respected, admired and appreciated creative person², the one who put the Australian on the map by means of The Campaign Palace Agency which became respected around the world (Bira et al.,2022). Under such circumstances, the advertisements can transmit encouraging supporting messages.

The best procedure an advertiser is supposed to follow is to embark upon a journey around the mind of his consumer, and to find out what his dreams are, in order to make his brand be able to fulfill them (the respective dreams).

Both ATL and BTL advertisements can successfully use the interrogative discourse in order to target the consumer

SIGNS OF A SUCCESSFUL ADVERTISEMENT

The well-known Unique Selling Proposition turns nowadays into an Emotional Selling Proposition (Szabo, 2023), as the emotional details which make brands different from one another are the ones that really matter for the target. Ogilvy himself presented us an experiment he tried with his students: he gave all of them to drink still water, telling them what they were truly drinking. A few moments later, he invited his students to drink again another little glass of water,

² See [https:// www.legendsandleaders.com.au](https://www.legendsandleaders.com.au) , accessed on the 7th of May 2024, 3:15 pm.

telling them it had been taken from the kitchen tap and asking them about its taste. They all rejected the second glass, bringing various reasons: some were speaking about its bad smell, others were mentioning its rusty taste, and they were all surprised when Ogilvy told them that they had drunk the same still water as they had tasted the first time. The difference was that the second time, they had tasted... the image the water had in their mind (Ogilvy, 1999). Ron Mather, ex-creative director at The Campaign Palace (agency which put the Australian advertising on the map and became respected around the world, at present executive director at The Grey Worldwide Australia) said the real job of an advertiser is to make someone want to buy a certain product (Aitchison, 2004, p.44).

An advertisement is also considered to be efficient when the promoted brand is clothed in an emotional advantage (not a rational one). Adorning the brand only with rational advantages (namely objective qualities) is the same with making it absolutely perfect for its would-be clients (Trancă, 2015). But in a party a perfect person will fade in front of a funny guest, ready to banter his own imperfections, providing thus a strong and self-confident personality. It is a fact that, especially for the products which imply a higher degree of the consumer involvement (such as motor cars, electronic devices, banking services, medicines) emotional advantages should be doubled by the rational ones. But it could be a mistake to build the advert only on the basis of the latter, because the print ad might turn into a boring one, and nobody would like to read it (Mackaym, 1998; Bira, Răducu, Stroe, Buzoianu, 2022).

This technique has been applied for the cheap products as well. Thus, an ordinary shampoo will not only wash your hair but also will provide you a Hollywood star look, so that the female consumer should agree on purchasing it on the spot.

Humor may be also helpful as it makes the two interlocutors (advertiser and consumer) shake hands and behave friendly. Humor is meant to underline that the advertiser understands and likes the consumer, and does not intend to change him, but to build a kind relationship with him (fact which governs all the three types of advertising: commercial, social and political as well).

The necessity for a memorable slogan is another hint for a successful advert, although there are voices (Tag Heuer³, Roy Grace⁴) pleading for its lack of

³ The creator of many successful watch adverts, among which Longines advertising campaign, having Di Caprio as guarantee – <http://www.magazine.tagheuer.com>, accessed on the 15th of May 2024, 10:32.

⁴ Art director, creative director, vice-chairman on the Board of The Doyle Dane Bernbach Group – <http://roygraceadman.com>, accessed on the 16th of May, 22:28.

importance. A good slogan is meant to remain in the mind of the consumer, and it vital and defining for the respective brand. A good slogan is strong and will influence the behavior of the consumer throughout his life (he will not accept any other brand as a substitute for his preferred one, even under difficult conditions; as it was the case of a Manchester United fan who did not accept to put on a cap with the name of another football team, although it was a hot summer day, and he had forgotten his Manchester United cap at home) (O'Shaughnessy, 2004)

The logo of the print-ad becomes an efficient one when the target recognizes the trademark without being mentioned as such. For instance, by using red and white colors and the specific, unmistakable letters, one should understand that he faces a Coca-Cola advertisement, even in the absence of the name of the company.

Not all print-ads in a campaign should look alike, but they should all create the same impression and give the target the feeling that the same voice is heard. Fishlock⁵ came with the following question: if the brand looks the same every time the consumer sees it, would not its personality suffer from lack of freshness and surprise? Roy Grace offered the solution: there should be continuity among the print-ads of the campaign, by means of using a certain type of photo, a set of colors or certain letters (O'Shaughnessy, 2004).

What all the advertisers have unanimously accepted is that any advertisement should be based on a certain original idea, mentioning that the artistic writing could never substitute it. People usually forget artistic creations, but they will keep in their mind good ideas. Practice has proved that the really efficient print-ads were simple and sincere ones, as they were showing real and natural slices of life (see the Marlboro Campaign, which is so simple, yet it has been impressive for many years), (Ogilvy, 1999).

LITERATURE REVIEW

All the „signs” mentioned above start functioning well if the very first textual contact with the consumer is well done, namely if the headline of the advertisement turns into a hook ready to catch the target. And it will be so if the headline is built by means of an interrogative sequence which attracts and intrigues at the same time. We should distinguish between the interrogative discourse in everyday talk and in advertising.

⁵ Nisha Fishlock, marketing executive in Gameforum, accessed on <http://www.globalgamesforum.com>, the 21st of May, 21:20.

In order to define the interrogative discourse in everyday speech, British specialists (Sinclair&Coulthard, 1993; Searle, 1979) started by answering the following questions:

- Is the question always addressed to the receiver?
- What sorts of activities are physically possible to be performed at the moment of questioning?
- What sorts of activities are forbidden at the moment of questioning?
- What sorts of activities have been indicated to be performed until the moment of questioning? (Sinclair &Coulthard, 1993)

The situational perspective should be taken into account, namely the external factors which contribute to the performance of the conversational act, the social conventions which may influence the conversation, and the specific manner the question is uttered (voice, intonation of the speaker).

RULES FOR DEFINING A QUESTION

From the traditional linguistics point of view, a question may be an assertive, an interrogative or an imperative sequence of discourse, whether it is a proper question or not. From the pragmatics point of view (Bălănescu, 2011, p.174) any type of verbal act may be a question (a representative, a declarative, a directive, an expressive/affective or a promising one). Specialists (Sinclair&Coulthard, 1993) have established three rules according to which an interrogative discourse could be defined as a question or a pseudo-question. In case it is not found to be a question, it could be either a complaint, a request, a threat or a command. Here are the rules as they are presented in the books mentioned above. For rule 1 the present paper used the example given by Bălănescu at page 175:

Rule 1

An interrogative discourse may be considered a **command** and not a question if:

- It contains a modal verb;
- The subject of the sentence is the Receiver himself/herself;
- The predicate of the sentence expresses an action which can be physically performed at the moment of speech.

Let us imagine the following dialogue between the partners of a couple, in their own house – for the first two sequences, out of their house – for the last one:

- a. I have bought everything you asked for preparing pancakes, as you promised. Will you cook them at last?
- b. Can Mary prepare pancakes?
- c. (She is shivering with cold in an old, shabby and deserted chalet in the mountains while he is asking her: Can you cook pancakes?

Example *a* is no doubt a **command**, as it fulfils all the three requirements: it contains a modal verb, the subject of the sentence is the Receiver herself (will you cook...?), and it expresses an action which can be performed at the moment of speech as there are all the necessary ingredients available for cooking pancakes, the couple being in their own house. Example *b* is a **question** because the Emitter (the speaker) is interested in the cooking abilities of another person, and the subject (Mary) is not the Receiver of the message. Example *c* is also a **question**, because the action expressed by the predicate cannot be physically performed, as the couple is having their dialogue inside an abandoned, cold and shabby chalet in the mountains. He is simply curious whether his partner is able to cook pancakes. Example *c* could have been a **command** in case the two of them were in their own house, namely in case the action expressed by the predicate of the sentence would have been physically possible.

Rule 2

Any assertive or interrogative discourse may be a **command** to stop a certain activity in case it refers to an action which is forbidden at the moment of speaking (the moment the dialogue between the two interlocutors is performed). For rule 2 the present paper used the example given by Bălănescu at page 176.

For instance, during training a team, its coach may utter one of the following sequences:

- d. I hear a voice criticizing my commands.
- e. Is there anyone criticizing my commands?
- f. Why are you criticizing my commands?

As far as we know, the team is expected to respect the commands of their coach and to accomplish them all. This is why the sequence uttered by the coach (examples d,e,f) may have one of the following interpretations, in pragmatic acts (Bălănescu, 2011; Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu, 2003):

- d – a command („Stop criticizing my commands!");

e – a command („Why do you criticize my commands when you know pretty well that you have to respect them”);

f – a command („Stop talking and do what I say!”).

It is obvious that, although example *e* is an interrogative sequence, the coach does not expect to get an answer of the type „because we do not feel like doing it”. On the contrary, he expects that the rebellious one should simply put an end to his rebellious attitude. This is why we consider it a **command**.

Sequence *f* cannot be also taken for a question as the coach does not expect to hear an answer of the type mentioned above, but to see the rebellious one giving up his negative attitude and joining the team. This sequence is a **command**, too.

But if the coaching time is over and the team is now preparing to go on a trip, to have the lunch in a restaurant where they are laughing and making jokes, and the coach, under such circumstances asks them:

g. Why were you criticizing my commands?

He could expect an answer of the type „Because we were all eager to listen to Jim who had spent two days with his would-be parents in law, and he had a hell of a time!” The conversation may easily go on from this point as the coach, who is felt like a friend of the young sportsmen could ask „What happen to Jim?” This is why sequence *g* may be taken for a **question**.

Rule 3

Any assertive or interrogative sequence may be interpreted as a **command** only if both interlocutors (advertiser – Emitter, and consumer – Receiver) know that the action expressed by the predicate had to be accomplished but it was not at the moment of speech. They also know that the action was not performed. For rule 3, the present paper used the example given by Bălănescu at page 178.

Let us imagine the following slice of life: both A and B know that B had to have his tooth extracted, but he did not do it, and now he bitterly suffers, complaining and crying. Interlocutor A may say:

h. Have you gone to the dentist today?

which is not a question, as he knows very well that B was in great pains, a fact which made him decide to have his tooth extracted or treated properly. But being afraid of going to the dentist, he postponed the visit. Thus, the uttered sequence should be interpreted as a **command** („Go to the dentist!”).

Only if A did not know about the dentist appointment, the sequence „Have you gone to the dentist today?” may be regarded as a **question**, because A is really waiting for an answer, under such circumstances.

Another type of dialogue may be developed on the same background. Mother, coming home late from work, is asking her daughter, who is listening to music: „You have washed the dishes, have you not?” but the sink in the kitchen is full of dirty dishes. The interrogative sequence is a **complaint**, as the daughter was supposed to have washed the dishes, but she simply did not. Both mother and daughter know that doing the dishes should have been performed until mother came home.

On the other hand, nobody doubts that the frequent interrogative sequence „Could/Would you please, open the door?” is not a question, but a polite **request**.

Here is a scene frequently happening during a written examination inside the students session of exams: one student is repeatedly asking his neighbor information for the exam, breaking thus the rule of keeping silence. The teacher finally says: „Would you like me to invite you out of the classroom and let you fail this exam?” This is not a question, but a possible **threat** referring to what might happen unless he is quiet.

As far as we see, there are several possible interpretations of the interrogative discourse in everyday talk, according to the relationship established between the interlocutors and the amount of information known by both of them and the type of the action to be performed.

2.2. THE INTERROGATIVE DISCOURSE IN ADVERTISING

The interrogative discourse may appear in building the headline of a print-ad. It cannot appear inside the body text as it offers information about the promoted product/service, and this information cannot show uncertainty, but trust and power, in order to make the consumer want to purchase it (Balaban, 2022).

The body text may be constituted of two distinct segments for the expensive products for which the consumer is highly involved: an affective one, which attracts the attention of the target, and an objective one which offers the proper information (technical features, composition, usage etc.) None of them can be based on the interrogative construction (Balica, 2020), as they are meant to convince the consumer that he is in need of the respective product/service, able to change his life for the better.

Neither the slogan can contain an interrogative sequence, as the slogan is meant to make the target remember the trademark and keep it in mind in order to purchase it when going shopping, nor the trademark can. In fact, this is the very reason the slogan has been created for: to implement the trademark inside the mind of the target (Hackley, 2021). Specialists have noticed that an advertisement can be brilliant, but the consumer does not remember its trademark and will purchase a product belonging to another company (trademark) (Ogilvy, 1999; Hopkins, 2015; David, 2019).

This is why the slogan should be a strong and short assertion able to make the consumer keep in mind the respective trademark.

Thus, the headline is the single possible advertising textual segment which may contain an interrogative sequence which draws the attention of the target and makes him think of a possible answer. It is not a proper question as it does not require any answer back, but it is a pretext for introducing the promoted product/service to the consumer. This sequence functions as the best solution for the consumer to fulfil his needs.

Although there are lots of similar products/services on the market, the advertiser suggests the consumer should make use of the promoted product, pleading for its being part of the life of the target.

The interrogative discourse in the headline prepares the context for introducing the body text which comes full of information. But this information would not be accepted (and read) unless the attention of the target was drawn by the so-called 'question' (Hopkins, 2015). The advertiser pretends to ask something, and he quickly gives the answer back, in order to make the consumer be sure that there is no other possible alternative.

CASE STUDY

The case study of the present paper contains three ATL (above the line) Romanian contemporary advertisements issued during the last seven years.

RAIFFEISEN BANK

Iconic message: The print-ad shows five jars of pickles nicely arranged. The advertisement is divided into two equal parts: the above segment standing for the iconic message, the other part standing for the textual message. At first glance, one

may think it is about preservatives or a newly opened restaurant or something connected with food.

Textual message

Headline. „How do you save your money?”

Body text: it gives all the necessary information for taking a bank loan by making use of a specialized language („flexible terms”, „competitive interest”, „banking assistance”)

Slogan: „Raiffeisen Bank. Your trustful bank”.

The print-ad is built on the bases of the association technique (Popescu, 2017; Bălănescu, 2011) which means that a great discrepancy is deliberately created between the iconic message and the text, in order to attract the attention of the target. At first sight, there is no connection between pickles and banking services, yet the word „save” in the headline develops two meanings: both preserving pickles and saving money. Thus, the feeling of tasting and enjoying the delicious pickles is associated with the satisfaction one feels when seeing his money deposit increase.

The interrogative headline is a false question, as it does not properly ask the consumer, and consequently does not wait for any answer back. It is a pretext for drawing the attention of the consumer upon a vital economic aspect of his life: saving money, and for indicating the best solution he, the consumer, should make use of (Scott, 2010). We could say that the so-called question turns into a pretext for introducing, namely promoting the banking product.

The promoting technique has proved to be an efficient one as it announced a dialogue between the customer and the advertiser, the latter showing himself interested in finding a good way for satisfying the needs of the former. Although there are lots of banks on the market, the message of the commercial is that Raiffeisen Bank is the single one considered to be trustful, and indicated to the client as his best option.

The association technique generates a **pragmatic act** which stands for the real communicative intention of the speaker (advertiser). The consumer is not explicitly told that saving money with Raiffeisen Bank will bring him the same satisfaction as when he tastes the delicious pickles several months later. The consumer will understand it by himself, helped by the iconic association. Thus „save” turns into a **deictic element of time** (of subjective nature), meaning that **anytime** he saves his money with Raiffeisen Bank, he will be satisfied.

BCR (THE ROMANIAN COMMERCIAL BANK)

Iconic message

A young, nicely dressed, newly married-couple is having a romantic dinner at home, in a shabby furnished room, where there is no table to eat on, as they are eating on an old-fashioned TV set. It is a romantic scene nonetheless, as two candles can be seen on their improvised table and the moon is shining in the sky. But they live a poor life as they share their single room with their child who is watching cartoons, holding her teddy bear, sitting on the floor.

Textual message

Headline: „Do you need more money?”

Body text: necessary information for taking a bank loan.

Slogan: „BCR. Choose the leader!”

The interrogative discourse in the headline is again a pretext for the advertiser to introduce his product to the consumer. It is obvious that the young couple is in need of money, and that BCR gives or may give them a helping hand. The advertiser does not waste his time waiting for an answer, because he is already prepared with the best option someone might have under such circumstances.

So, the print-ad has drawn the **attention** of the target audience by means of the iconic message in which lots of young married couples may recognize themselves, it has also made the target be **interested** in it, as young people nowadays face lots of troubles related to their daily expenses, and their low salaries. It means that so far, the print-ad has succeeded in making its target audience **desire** to take **action**, that is to put an end to the hard life and buy the promoted product: MAXICREDIT banking service. The AIDA (attention, interest, desire, action) principle has been thus fulfilled, and the message became efficient.

The piece of advice „Choose the leader!” introduces a **social deictic element** which defines the promoted bank (Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu, 2003). One may take a credit from any bank in the market, but BCR is defined as the best choice by its strength. Here is another reason for us to believe that the AIDA principle (attention, interest, desire, action) has been successfully fulfilled (Aitchison, 2004).

SKODA FABIA LADY

Iconic message

A red Skoda Fabia Lady car on a dark background, under a reddish spot of light. At first sight, the image does not interest anyone, does not intrigue, does not catch the eye or the mind one way or another (Szabo, 2023). This is why we look around and get into the textual message which cleverly surrounds the proper image of the car, which attracts our attention because almost every line is corrected (as if it was badly

conceived), and we ask ourselves how was it possible for the advertiser to have been so absent-minded as to make so many mistakes in a relatively small text.

Textual message

Body-text

The body-text is made up of two main segments: an objective one, written in small fonts, standing for the real technical performances of the promoted motorcar, which would not be read unless the subjective segment appeared. When reading it, we face a clever figure of speech: correction, which gives the false impression of correcting something which has been wrongly expressed. Actually, it is no correction at all. It simply draws our attention to certain topics which turn out to be the main technical points of interest of the promoted product. Linguistically speaking, the construction is based on paronyms, being brought side by side those words which sound quite alike but are very different from one to another.

The art of creation can be felt only in Romanian, as the words are grouped in pairs, each of the two standing for a certain and distinct universe: the fragile, delicate feminine universe, and the universe of motorcar technicity. `far – fard`, `volan – volane`.

Headline

Correction is present from the very first textual contact of the print-ad with the target audience, namely from the headline. The initial construction was `What do women want?`. The text was corrected and it became `What do women want really?`, in order to emphasize the special interest the advertiser showed to understand the feminine universe.

The noun `women` turns into a social deictic element of subjective nature (Bălănescu, 2011) because it depicts a certain feminine target. The young, independent women are interested both in their good look, and in a fast, comfortable motorcar able to take them go from one place to another.

The slogan underlines the basic quality of the promoted product and of the target, at the same time: `Simply clever`.

CONCLUSIONS. LIMITATIONS. RECOMMENDATIONS

At the end of this research, the following conclusions may be drawn:

The interrogative discourse can be successfully used in building the headline of a print ad, as it works as a hook which draws the attention of the consumer, making him/her curious about the rest of the advertising message.

The interrogative discourse can thus stand for cleverly introducing the promoted product/service to the target audience as, once the question is uttered, the consumer will think of an answer. And the answer is given to him/her back on the spot by the body-text itself (procedure which represents the source of a pragmatic act).

The pragmatic means can be also successfully exploited, among which the pragmatic act and the subjective deictic elements.

The present paper is limited only to those products which imply a high degree of consumer involvement. The study could be extended to the cheap products as well, and it might be interesting to demonstrate the efficiency of the interrogative discourse in building such a print ad.

The article is also limited to several pragmatic concepts, but the investigation may be deepened in order to highlight the importance of some other pragmatic concepts, such as: context, situational context (represented by the iconic message itself), verbal acts or the circumstances the two principles of communication (the principle of cooperation and the principle of politeness) are kept or broken.

Therefore it is warmly recommended that further investigation should be done in order to underline more aspects connected with the efficiency of a print-ad: more types of products to be analyzed and more pragmatic concepts/categories be taken into consideration.

It would be also interesting to see in a follow-up article how the theories of advertising work in order to enlarge the efficiency of the interrogative discourse. It would be also interesting to investigate the BTL⁶ advertisements which represent a huge category of messages addressed to an ever-changing mass of consumers.

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⁶ BTL = bellow the line

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